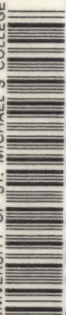
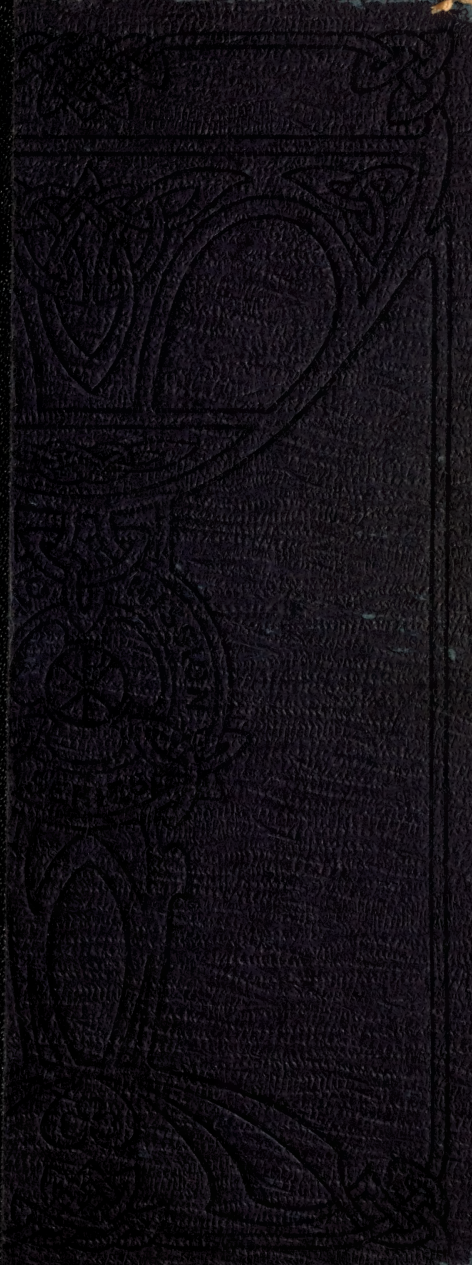


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LIGHT IN DARKEST AFRICA

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Charles Cardinal Lavigerie, 1825-92

By E. LEAHY



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TO THE MEMORY
OF THAT GLORIOUS PONTIFF
LEO XIII
WHO "LOVED CARDINAL LAVIGERIE
AS A BROTHER"

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LIGHT IN DARKEST AFRICA

CHAPTER I.

THE MAN AND HIS WORK.

“And why, my child, do you wish to be a priest?” asked the Bishop, smiling benevolently at the handsome boy before him, whose dark eyes shone like lamps and whose rich young blood flushed his cheek. Without a moment’s hesitation, the boy answered clearly, distinctly, “Because I should like to be a country parish priest.” The boy’s father, standing beside him, gasped. This, indeed, was a revelation. Never for one moment did he suspect that this bright boy of his, the very incarnation of young life and high spirits, cherished such a strange desire.

For a few moments after this unexpected answer there was silence. The Bishop leaned back in his chair, and fixing his keen penetrating gaze upon the young aspirant to the priesthood, whose dark flashing eyes met his so fearlessly, seemed to study him intently. Then once more the kind voice of the Bishop was heard, “Go, my child,” said he, laying his hand in blessing on the boy’s head, “go to the Seminary, and there God

will show you the path in which He would have you walk,"—these words were prophetic. The boy went to the Seminary and became a priest. Many were the paths by which God led him, but all indeed far removed from that of his boyish dreams. The boy to whom Mgr. Lacroix, Bishop of Bayonne, spoke those words was Charles Martial Lavigerie, afterwards priest, professor of the Sorbonne, auditor of the Rota, Bishop of Nancy, Archbishop of Algiers and Carthage, primate of Africa, the founder of a new Religious Order, the champion of the cause of the African slaves, and prince of the Church. To him, many years later, Pope Leo wrote, "The services you have rendered to Africa merit for you to be counted among those who deserve most from Catholicity and civilisation."

To give, even in outline, within the limits of a brief sketch, a picture of the great Cardinal Lavigerie, one of the foremost figures of the age, must prove a difficult task—so many and so varied were his splendid gifts, so commanding his personality, so stupendous the work which he accomplished. It has been said that we of the present day are too near him to judge of him rightly, that the perspective of time is needed to bring into full relief the man and his work.

Tracing this grand career, the thought comes to us that there is no profession in which the commanding genius of the Cardinal would not have achieved brilliant success. He had lofty ambition, an indomitable will that trampled down all difficulties and obstacles, inexhaustible energy that sustained him in full vigour and enabled him to

bear and to overcome with unconquered spirit disappointment, failure, misrepresentation, nay, even abuse. He had all the qualities of a great commander, unrivalled powers of organisation, the keen eye that at a glance measured his enemy's force and enabled him with marvellous strategical skill to shape his own course accordingly. A born ruler of men, he exacted from all under his authority unhesitating obedience, at the same time the magnetism of his fascinating personality won for him faithful love and service. He had the wisdom, the foresight, the tact, the unfailing courtesy, the invincible resolution of a great statesman. A golden-tongued orator, he swayed the multitudes, and held his audience spell-bound. Wielding a facile pen, he achieved distinction as a writer. Let us add in addition that the Cardinal was of handsome features, of majestic presence, and distinguished bearing. But all these magnificent gifts were employed in the service of Jesus Christ, for the greater glory of Him Who gave them, and for the salvation of souls.

It was pre-eminently as a missionary that he excelled. His was the true missionary spirit that permitted no thought of self, that made light of all personal privations and suffering, that was ready and willing to face all dangers, to sacrifice life itself for the salvation of souls. In contact with poor afflicted humanity a prey to loathsome diseases, his spirit knew no repugnance, seeing only the immortal souls for whom Jesus Christ died.

"The charity of Christ urgeth me"; such was indeed the watchword of this man of God; such

was the golden rule of action which he gave to the members of his Society, the observance of which he strictly enjoined on them in all their intercourse with their fellow-men. By charity were souls to be won for Christ, that tender charity that would relieve the bodily wants and sufferings of those most hopelessly sunk in the depths of heathenism. These were to be fed, clothed, tended, sheltered, even though no spiritual gain were to be expected.

To read of the Cardinal's labours during those years in which he filled the archiepiscopal See of Algiers and Carthage fills one with amazement at his super-human energy. To follow him on his constant journeyings induces a feeling of breathlessness. All over Europe his name, his presence were known. In France, England, Belgium, Switzerland, Holland, Germany, he preached and held meetings, moving all hearts by his impassioned eloquence as he pleaded the cause of the African slaves, everywhere seeking to enlist all Christian nations in a crusade against the awful horrors of the African slave trade. How often did he not undertake the journey to Rome to seek counsel from the Head of the Church. He even travelled to Jerusalem where he founded a monastery for his missionaries. Yet, notwithstanding this constant journeying to and fro, he ruled his diocese with perfect order and regularity, not the least detail of diocesan affairs escaping his watchfulness. He built churches, colleges, schools, hospitals, monasteries ; he found time and opportunity to organise and consolidate the foundations of his new Society.

It has been said that in the Cardinal's heart were three loves : the Church, France, Africa. No need surely to speak of his loyalty to the Church of which he was such a devoted son. Intense was the personal love that he had for the Pope, a love which was reciprocated. "I loved him as a brother," said Leo XIII., when news of the Cardinal's death reached him, "even as Peter loved Andrew."

In his love for his country, he realised the highest ideal of patriotism. He would have France first and greatest amongst the nations, but he knew that without God, without Religion no true greatness or prosperity could be hers. Hence, during his whole life he waged continual war against the forces of infidelity, against the iniquitous laws by which the enemies of God and of His Church sought to destroy Religion.

How tell of Cardinal Lavigerie's great love for Africa. "I loved," he wrote, "everything connected with Africa, her past, her future, her mountains, her pure sky, her sun, the great lines of her desert." And as death draws near, he apostrophises this love of his heart thus : "O beloved Africa, I have sacrificed all for you. Twenty-five years ago, urged by an interior force that was of God, I left everything to devote myself to your service. And since then what journeys, what fatigue, what labours have I not undertaken? I recall these only to express my unalterable hope that the portion of this great continent which in past ages was a stronghold of Christianity may be once more restored to the light, whilst that part that has ever been immersed in barbarism may emerge from the darkness."

His love embraced the whole of Africa, and he sent apostles to bring her the light of the Gospel. His labours were not in vain. Already, before his death, his eyes were gladdened by the rich promise of the harvest that his sons would reap. Joyfully he writes: "This is the work to which I have consecrated my life. But what is the life of one man for such an undertaking; scarcely have I even outlined the work. I have been but the voice in the wilderness, calling those who are to mark out therein the road to the Gospel. I die then, beloved Africa, without having been able to do anything for you save suffer, and, by my sufferings, prepare for you apostles."

With all his splendid gifts of mind and heart, his transcendent genius, the Cardinal was a man. He was human, therefore he had his faults. He had "*les défauts de ses qualités.*" Of an imperious nature, with a will inflexible as iron, he was, one may say, despotic in his ruling. He would not brook the least contradiction, the least opposition from those under him from whom, as we said before, he required unhesitating obedience. His temper was as ardent as the African sun, and woe betide the luckless individual who ventured to disobey. Swift as a tropical storm, and as violent, descended his wrath on the offender's head, leaving him dazed. But like the tropical one, this storm of anger was quickly over.

When, as often happened, conscience-stricken, he recognised in calmer moments that the measure of his displeasure had indeed been excessive, with what winning sweetness and humility did he not make reparation! And then how tender-hearted

he was. One of his household sick, he lavished upon him the most anxious care, visiting him, watching lest he might want for anything, providing every comfort, taking care that the best medical skill was requisitioned. No one ever sought his aid in vain ; no tale of want or misery ever found in him an indifferent listener. Christian or heathen, sinner or saint, it mattered not. To be suffering, to be sorrowful, to be hungry, to be sick : that was the sure road to his heart. He was as responsive to the cry of distress, no matter whence it came, as an Aeolian harp is to the lightest zephyr.

The great Cardinal has passed from the scene of his earthly labours, but his work lives on and flourishes. His sons, the White Fathers, faithful to the spirit of their illustrious founder, carry on the work which he committed to them, and their labours are fruitful, are visibly blessed.

CHAPTER II.

VOCATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD.

On the 31st October, 1825, in the beautiful old southern city of Bayonne was born the future Prince of the Church who received in Baptism the names of Charles Martial. His parents were of good social position, his father, Léon Philippe Allemand Lavigerie, holding the important post of Controller of the Customs, whilst his mother was the daughter of M. Pierre Latrillie, Director of the Royal Mint. M. Lavigerie's family, of whom Charles was the first born, consisted of three sons and one daughter.

The Controller of the Customs was a competent official, a thorough man of business, skilled in the management of men, a firm believer in the rule of the iron hand in a velvet glove. He was handsome, very tall, of distinguished appearance, courteous in manner, genial and hospitable, a great favourite with his fellow-citizens. Constantly immersed in business, he had neither time nor inclination to take any part in the training of his children beyond insisting on their absolute obedience to him; a man of iron will, he would not brook the least opposition or contradiction from any member of his household.

How easily in this portrait we trace the son's resemblance to his father !

Madame Laure Louise Lavigerie was a woman of very sweet disposition and of great charm and distinction of manner ; she was also highly educated and possessed much literary taste ; an admirable mistress of her household, she was at the same time known as an accomplished society woman.

M. and Mde. Lavigerie were both practical Catholics ; at the same time it cannot be said that the atmosphere of their home was exactly religious ; religion had a certain place therein, but not the first place. M. Lavigerie entertained men of the most varied opinions and of widely differing religious beliefs or of none. All those admitted to his house and hospitality were eminently respectable and supereminently worldly. This is not the soil or the atmosphere in which vocation to the priesthood is wont to take root and flourish. But "the Spirit breatheth where He willeth," and in all conditions, in all places. God finds instruments for the accomplishment of His designs. Mgr. Lavigerie himself tells us that he owed his earliest religious instruction to two good women servants in his father's house who had been previously in the household of his maternal grand-parents. It was from Marianne and Jeannette that he learned his first prayers and the Catechism. With them he went to Mass, to Benediction. They taught him to sing the simple hymns sung by the peasantry ; above all they taught him by the force of their own good example, and child as he was, their simple faith and piety made a lasting impression on his young

heart. "If I am what I am," said the Cardinal in a sermon preached in his native city, "it is to these holy women that I owe it."

Another who did much to train this young soul in the knowledge and love of God was a maternal grand-aunt, Madame Lemosquet, a highly educated woman of rare natural gifts and solid piety. She had for her young nephew a strong affection, and during her whole life gave him a mother's care.

From his earliest years, Charles manifested unmistakable signs of his future vocation. Scarcely more than an infant, he went through the house, proclaiming that he was a priest, and no one dared to contradict him. With the utmost gravity he would go through the ceremonies of the Church, his grandmother, on compulsion, acting as acolyte. He had stated times for the services, and the moment he rang the bell the young autocrat insisted on *every member* of his congregation instantly obeying the summons, no matter what *their* occupation. He preached, but interesting as it would be, there is no record of the subject of his sermons. It seems he would fain have had his subjects go to Confession, but it does not appear that in this the little despot had his way.

In Bayonne there was a large colony of Jews, and we are told that the young Charles filled with zeal for souls, whenever he met the Jewish children in the streets, wanted to hustle them, willy-nilly, to the river-side in order that he might baptise them.

At an early age Charles was sent to an excellent school under lay management. As a scholar he

was somewhat erratic; he had fits of industry during which he worked hard at his studies, then came spells of idleness. But whether he worked or was idle, he was always head of his class, as also leader of the college sports. Full of life and boyish fun, ardent, impetuous, imperious, despotic, yet he won all hearts, and ruled the whole school.

It was at this period that Charles made his First Communion, and, as so often happens, this most solemn event was the turning point in his life. For on that day his vocation was irrevocably decided. He resolved to become a priest, and without delay, made known his decision with the invincible determination which even in early years was a marked characteristic of his nature. To his parents and grand-parents this announcement came as a shock. They had never taken his childish predilections seriously, but now they felt that they were no longer dealing with a child. Grievous was their disappointment. To them this boy, so headstrong, but yet so lovable, was inexpressibly dear; they anticipated for him a great future, great in their sense of the word. And now, all their fond hopes were cruelly shattered, yet there was some consolation; surely as the years passed, bringing with them clear understanding and knowledge of his splendid prospects, this youthful fancy would pass away. But meanwhile Charles was demanding to be sent to the Seminary of Larressore. At last, in despair, M. Lavigerie resolved to consult Mgr. Lacroix on the subject.

His interview with the Bishop has been already described in the Introduction to this sketch.

To the end of his life the recollection of that interview, so momentous for him, never faded from the Cardinal's memory. "The Bishop's reception room," he wrote from Africa, "which seemed to me of vast dimensions, with the furniture covered in yellow velvet, is always before me. I still see the sofa on which sat the good Bishop in his purple soutane. He drew me to him, and caressing me, asked, 'Why do you wish to be a priest, my child?' Encouraged by his kindness to me, I answered boldly, 'Because, Monseigneur, I want to be a country parish priest.' My father looked at me in astonishment, surprised, no doubt, at my predilection for the country of which he had no suspicion."

Commenting on the Bishop's words, the Cardinal continues, "He saw more clearly into the future than I did. I went to the Seminary of Larressore, and afterwards: Where is it that I have not gone? My country parish remained the dream of childhood, but at times, in the midst of life's cares and labours, it has also been the longing of my mature years. As Mgr. Lacroix predicted, God has led me whither He would, and thus it is that to-day I am writing, not from a presbytery in Bearn, but from the ruins of Carthage."

The Bishop's words were final. To Larressore Charles was sent and there, as usual, he quickly won all hearts, his faults notwithstanding, his imperiousness, his hot temper, an inflexible will which bore down all opposition. But who could resist the charm of this handsome, highly-gifted boy, the very personification of the joy and brightness of youth, who was so noble and generous in

all his actions. Those well qualified to judge, who watched him when about fifteen, with wise discerning eyes, bore testimony that he was singularly noble-minded, honourable, conscientious, spotlessly pure and innocent, and solidly religious.

After a year spent at Larresorre, M. Lavigerie in 1841, sent his son to the Seminary of Saint Nicolas du Chardonnet in Paris, of which the illustrious Abbé Dupanloup was just at that time Superior. Of this house the Cardinal thus records his recollections: "The gloomy old house with its dark corridors, its airless courtyard surrounded by high prison-like walls, the poor, mean neighbourhood—all, I admit, inspired me with disgust and sadness when I went there in my boyhood. I had just left the mountains, the clear sky of my native place, the Seminary of Larressore so beautifully situated on the lower slopes of the Pyrenees, overlooking the lovely Valley of the Nive. It was October; the fog and gloom of winter hung round the dreary abode, making it still drearier. What a contrast! I felt as if I should die. But by degrees, in the gloomy darkness I saw another sun arise which warmed my soul and aroused it from the torpor in which its powers lay paralysed, a sun which ere long flooded all with light. It was he, the Superior, he in all the ardour of his spirit, with his heart open to all holy enthusiasms, who thus transfigured our whole surroundings, who transported us all, masters and pupils, to the highest summits of all things, human and divine. His appearance, his looks, his words, his faith

revealed to us in language, so moving, so new to us : all carried us away in a flood of admiration, of awe, of respect such as I never experienced again in the same degree. If he would gather all to himself it was that he might give all to Jesus Christ according to the divine plan traced by St. Paul, *Omnia vestra sunt, vos autem Christi*, 'For all are yours, and you are Christ's' (I Cor. III, 23).

In October, 1843, being then eighteen years of age, Charles Lavigerie entered the Seminary of Saint Sulpice. He was sent at first for his studies in philosophy to the house at Issy, and whilst there he assumed the clerical habit.

From a letter written by the Cardinal in 1891 to a young student at Issy, it appears that it was during his sojourn there that he felt the call to the missionary life. "It was in that house, dear child, that I first felt my vocation for the Foreign Missions whilst listening to a saintly missionary bishop, Mgr. Verole, Vicar Apostolic in Manchuria, who told us of his trials, his consolations, his hopes. At that time, who could have told me, my dear child, that almost the whole of my life as Bishop would be spent at the Missions, far from France? But who can tell, my child, that you, yourself, may not, one day, be carried away, as I was, by the gentle violence of a maternal providence that ever guides us even when we would choose the wrong path."

In 1845, after two years spent in the study of philosophy at Issy, Charles Lavigerie returned to St. Sulpice where he had the great happiness of finding his friend, M. de Courson, the late Superior at Issy, who was just appointed Superior-

General of the Society. No one ever so thoroughly understood the complex nature of Charles Lavigerie as did this learned and saintly priest of whom it was said that never was Superior so loved during life or so mourned at his death.

In October, 1846, we find Charles in new surroundings. Mgr. Affre, Archbishop of Paris, had just founded a House of Higher Studies in the ancient Monastery of the Carmelite Fathers in the Rue Vaugirard, which was still known by the name of les Carmes, for the benefit of ecclesiastical students from all the dioceses of France who wished to study for their University degrees. The Archbishop requested the Superior of St. Sulpice to send to this House some of their most brilliant subjects, specially naming Charles Lavigerie. Of course there was no refusing the Archbishop, and accordingly young Lavigerie, who had just finished his first year of theology, took up his abode in les Carmes. In ten months he obtained his degree of Bachelor and Licentiate of Arts. At Christmas of the year 1847 Charles Lavigerie received Holy Orders as sub-deacon from the hands of Mgr. Affre, who in June of the following year was shot by the Revolutionists; in December, 1848, he was ordained deacon by Mgr. Sibour, and in June, 1849, he was ordained priest by the same prelate, by dispensation from the Pope, Charles not having yet completed his twenty-fourth year.

By a strange coincidence, as the Cardinal himself recalled during a visit paid to Saint Sulpice in 1885, the Archbishop of Paris, who conferred on him the Order of sub-deacon, was shot at the

barricades, and his successor, Mgr. Sibour, by whom the Cardinal was ordained priest, was murdered at the Altar, whilst the Archbishop of Paris, whom he replaced in the See of Nancy, was shot as a hostage.

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CHAPTER III.

FIRST MISSIONARY LABOURS

Shortly after his ordination, the young Abbé Lavigerie at Mgr. Sibour's desire, returned to les Carmes to study for his doctor's degree, brilliant success crowning his efforts in a very short time, after which he was appointed Professor of Latin literature in the House of Higher Studies. The emoluments attached to this post were small, and so the young Professor, in order to live, found himself obliged to accept the position of assistant-chaplain to two Convents conveniently situated near les Carmes.

In 1853, he became a candidate for the important post of chaplain to the Chapter of St. Geneviève. When the examination was over, it was found that he was first of all competitors. The brilliant gifts of this young Professor made a profound impression on the examiners, with the result that on receiving their report, Mgr. Sibour introduced him to the Minister of Public Instruction, who at once appointed him to the Chair of Ecclesiastical History at the Sorbonne.

Just about this time the Abbé suffered a great sorrow in the death of his mother to whom he was tenderly attached. He had the consolation

of being with her in her last moments and of administering to her the last rites of the Church.

Born orator and *litterateur* as he was, it cannot be said that his new duties as Lecturer were exactly distasteful to him, but he found them monotonous. The calm, the retirement, the slow-dropping hours of Academic life were a trial. As he said himself, he felt "stifled, oppressed." He would be amongst the thronging crowds of the world's arena, bearing the heat and burthen of the day, battling with the forces of evil, labouring for the welfare of his fellow men.

But, even as the uneventful days went by, each one with its unvarying routine of professorial duties, and its leisure hours, a kind providence was shaping the course of events towards the realisation of his wishes.

At the close of the Crimean War a society had been formed in Paris for the purpose of founding Catholic schools in the East, a scheme which it was hoped would do much to increase the prestige of France amongst Orientals as much from a political as from a religious point of view. Notwithstanding that the society numbered amongst its members many famous men, the project did not make much head-way, at least the sinews of war were very slow in coming in. It was felt that at this juncture a master-mind, capable of grasping and overcoming the difficulties of such a work, was needed. But that master-mind was as yet to seek.

It is at this stage that the Abbé Lavigerie comes upon the scene. But we shall let himself describe his introduction to the Society :—"I was at that

time Professor at the Sorbonne, and was engaged in giving a course of lectures on Jansenism to an audience of twenty-five. Nothing foreshadowed to me that my peaceful life as a professor—in which however I felt stifled—was coming to an end, that I was about to enter into a very different one. Here is how all at once the thing happened.

“ My confessor was the saintly and illustrious Father de Ravignan, towards whom I had been strongly attracted both by his sanctity and his splendid character, as well also, in a certain degree, by the fact that he was, like myself, a native of Bayonne. Our early recollections formed a bond of sympathy between us, for we had both spent almost the whole of our childhood within the shadow of the same old Cathedral, and in the same street, though in different houses.

“ This great Religious, who was a past master in the guidance of souls, had never spoken to me directly about the unsuitability of my life of study and of professorial duties, yet he often said that he foresaw another career before me. One day he told me that on the previous evening Father Gagarin had called on him to inform him that the members of the newly founded Society for the Establishment of Catholic schools in the East, recognising how difficult it was for the laity to organise and to propagate such a work, had resolved to place it under clerical management. And then without further preamble, he said, smiling as he spoke, ‘ All these gentlemen, very naturally, have in their minds a certain professor of the Sorbonne, whom they are most anxious to have at the head of affairs. I am here as their

representative. What is your answer to their request?' I was neither surprised nor flurried by this proposal. 'If you think, Father, that it is the Will of God,' I answered, 'I am ready.' 'I do think so,' he replied quite simply. And these four words decided the whole affair.

"The next day, Father Gagarin came and carried me off to the Rue de l'Universite, where at the Offices of the Marine the lay Committee had assembled under the presidency of Admiral Mathieu, brother of the Cardinal Archbishop of Besançon. Without giving me time to say a word, the good Father announced everything was settled and that it only remained for the Committee to tender me a vote of thanks, which being done, they handed to me the account books and the cash box, the last being very easily carried indeed, for its contents had just been distributed amongst the Oriental institutions. All this happened towards the end of the year 1856. As we left the committee room together, Father Gagarin looked at me with a droll smile, 'You are launched upon the waters, my dear Abbé,' he said, 'what you have to do now, is to keep afloat.'"

Such was the inauguration of the great Cardinal's long apostolic career, of those almost superhuman labours in which he was engaged until the very end, until he was, as it were, consumed in the fiery furnace of his own glowing zeal and charity.

No need to describe the ardour with which he entered upon the duties of this new office, so thoroughly in harmony as it was, with his own most cherished desires. Above all things he longed for the re-union of the separated Churches

under one Head, the Vicar of Christ in the See of Peter. And he considered that the way to overcome the mass of popular prejudice and ignorance which presented almost insuperable difficulties was the enlightenment of the people by means of instruction. Hence he threw himself into the work of the new Society with all the enthusiasms of his nature.

During three years he preached in every large city of France what he himself called a new crusade, made house to house collections, and organised local committees. All this was done without any interruption to his lectures at the Sorbonne.

His account of his experiences during those three years journeyings is very amusing. Generally speaking, the bishops and parish priests gave him a good reception, but sometimes he was dismissed with scant courtesy, and even treated as an adventurer, a fraud.

But his strong will enabled him everywhere "to ride upon the storm triumphantly. He simply laughed at difficulties and objections." "I was young and hot-headed, and I was a native of the Basque country, into the bargain, and so, by my birth-right, could be stubborn." On one occasion he was forewarned that no one would attend his sermon. "Oh!" replied the Abbé, "that doesn't matter, I have been trained at the Sorbonne where my audience is very small."

Long after, the Cardinal used to say that he had learned great compassion for those who, like himself, were obliged to beg alms for charitable undertakings.

In 1860, all Europe was horrified at the news that some of the wildest tribes in Syria, with the connivance of the Turks, had descended on the Christians of the Lebanon, then under the French Protectorate. Fifty thousand of their defenceless victims were slaughtered, whilst nearly 200,000 were left homeless, wandering fugitives without shelter without food.

To protect those Christians who had escaped, the French Government at once prepared a military expedition. But the material wants of the poor sufferers, who would supply these? The Abbé Lavigerie came to the rescue. Here was a task peculiarly befitting the Society of which he was the Director, a task congenial to the Director himself. Immediately, he issued an impassioned appeal for funds to the bishops and priests of France which met with the most generous response. From every country in Europe large sums of money were sent, as well as gifts in kind, food, clothes, vestments, altar requisites. And now arose the question: Who would undertake the task—a dangerous one—of superintending the distribution of such an immense sum of money—two million francs—and stores of every kind? Without a moment's hesitation the Abbé Lavigerie again stepped into the breach and offered his services, which, needless to say, were gladly accepted.

On the 27th September, accompanied by an eminent physician of Biarritz, Dr. Vanlerry, the friend and companion of his boyhood, the Abbé set out on his difficult mission, reaching Beyrout early in October. In co-operation with

the Oriental bishops, he at once organised effective measures of relief.

During the three months of his sojourn no danger could deter him from his work of charity. He would see for himself the unspeakable horrors ; he would bring to the stricken survivors relief for soul and body.

At length, in the month of December, the Abbé, with regret as he himself admitted, bade farewell to the East and turned his face homewards, followed by the prayers and benedictions of grateful hearts. Before his departure he was presented with an address in Arabic from eighteen Oriental bishops in which with all the glowing imagery of the East he was termed " a miracle of charity, the instrument of the hand of the God of mercies, the treasure which on a day fairer than the Spring-tide, the West had sent to the East. "

Those three months had changed the whole current of the Abbé's thoughts and views. He now fully realised that he was essentially and before all things, a missionary. " It was as a director of the Oriental schools " he wrote later, " that I found myself for the first time in an infidel land, I went as the representative of the Catholics to distribute relief, there for the first time I saw their sun which is also the sun of our own Africa, there, at last, I came to know my real vocation."

And yet when starting on this journey to the East, the Abbé felt the strongest presentiment that he would never return. " I was convinced," he wrote, " that I should never return, that I should die in that Eastern land to which I was bringing relief. The bad state of my health, the

fatigue of such a long voyage, the dangers to be incurred : all tended to encourage this feeling. I felt glad that I was going to die, if God so willed, in the service of my brethren. Is not charity the most glorious of all battle-fields ?”

On his arrival in France, the Abbé was accorded a most flattering reception ; from all sides compliments and congratulations were showered upon him. In all the leading journals laudatory notices of himself and of his work appeared, and to crown all this admiration, Napoleon III. conferred on him the Cross of the Legion of Honour.

Meanwhile in Rome, the Office of Auditor of the Rota for France became vacant, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, impressed by the Abbé's success in the East, suggested him to Pope Pius IX as suitable for the position. The Holy Father gladly accepted the suggestion, and appointed him to the office, which carried with it the dignity of Domestic Prelate. Before leaving for Rome, Mgr. Lavigerie was received in private audience by the Emperor, who fully realized the importance to France of the Prelate's new mission.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CALL OF AFRICA

Undoubtedly the new appointment which made Mgr. Lavigerie a member of the highest court in Rome was one that would have attracted a man of ordinary ambition. Considering not merely the external honour due to the holder of such a post, but its true importance in regard to the work which it involved, the office was fully worth his acceptance. He did accept it, but all the same to do so cost Mgr. Lavigerie much real sacrifice. At this time all his thoughts—his aspirations were centred in missionary work to which he now realised beyond the possibility of doubt that he was called. He had learned his vocation for life during his labours in Syria, and as the director of the Society for the propagation of Catholic teaching in the East he felt that the field of missionary labour was open to him. Therefore to give up his work for the Society seemed to him, as he said, like renouncing his true vocation. At his earnest request, he was permitted to retain the directorship and also to found a second Council or centre for the work in Rome, which arrangement caused him great pleasure. Where could the work of the Society be more suitably carried on than in

the shadow of the Vatican under the protection of the Pope and of the Propaganda ?

For nearly two years Mgr. Lavigerie discharged the important functions of his office, which won for him the highest praise and approval. But, we shall not be surprised to learn that just as little as the academic calm of life at the Sorbonne did the slow moving routine of his new duties prove congenial. As he said himself " he was out of his element." The Holy Father who had a special affection for Mgr. Lavigerie agreed with the French Government that the special gifts of the Auditor would find more scope and be more suitably employed in the active life of a bishop. In 1863, he was nominated to the See of Nancy, his consecration taking place on the 22nd of March in Rome, in the Church of St. Louis des Francais, he being thirty-seven years of age.

Before leaving Rome, he addressed a pastoral letter to the people of Nancy, bearing date, Easter Sunday, April 5, 1863, which concludes as follows :

" My mission is to teach you three things, the most sacred, the most important, the most indispensable which can be taught on earth : to know God, to love Him, and to serve Him. For all else is but a dream which passes away."

The four years of Mgr. Lavigerie's episcopacy at Nancy were years of strenuous, devoted service to the diocese, of wise and far-seeing administration, of vigorous measures of reform.

Some of these measures, more especially those relating to the existing system of education in college and convent schools, at first occasioned dissatisfaction, and were strongly opposed.

But wholly indifferent to grumblings or objections, the Bishop pursued his course, and by force of his indomitable will crushed all opposition. As time passed the wisdom of his action was fully vindicated by its success.

Apart from these occasional and inevitable interludes of dissent, the wheels of life for Mgr. Lavigerie during this period of his career ran smoothly. Now, as ever, the charm of his personality, his imperious nature notwithstanding, subjugated all who came under its influence, and as each year revealed more fully his splendid gifts of mind and heart so did the love and esteem of priests and people for their Bishop increase. Nothing foreshadowed to Pastor or flock that the hour of separation was rapidly drawing near.

On the morning of the 18th of November, 1866, Mgr. Lavigerie received a letter which completely changed the course of his life. This fateful letter was written by Marshal McMahon, at that time Governor-General of Algeria, who knew and admired the Bishop of Nancy. From Compiègne, where he was then staying, he wrote as follows :

“ Monseigneur —I have just heard the sad news of the death of Mgr. Pavé of Algiers. Foreseeing that in all probability the Emperor will consult me with regard to his successor in the See, after careful consideration I have come to the conclusion that there is no one so pre-eminently fitted to be Archbishop of Algiers as the Bishop of Nancy. Of this I am intimately convinced, but before naming you, I must know your wishes regarding this matter. I beg of you, therefore, to let me know if you will accept the position, in my opinion,

one of the most important which could be given to one of the priesthood of France. True, it is one of considerable difficulty, But I know your zeal for Religion, and I am confident that the difficulties will not frighten a man of your character. Let me have your answer as soon as possible."

This letter reached Mgr. Lavigerie on the 18th November, and on the 19th, after having offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to obtain God's guidance, he wrote to the Marshal expressing his willingness to accept the Sea of Algiers.

"As far as I am personally concerned," he wrote, "I should never have thought of leaving a diocese to which I am deeply attached, and if your Excellency had offered me a See of greater importance than Nancy, my answer would certainly have been in the negative. But when I assumed the burthen of the episcopacy I vowed myself to a life of self-sacrifice. You offer me a difficult and laborious mission, a See in all respects inferior to my own, the acceptance of which involves exile from all that I hold dear, but for which you think I am better suited than anyone else. To such an offer a Catholic bishop can give but one answer: I accept the painful sacrifice offered to me, no matter what the cost."

This prompt acceptance of a position which entailed great self-sacrifice caused much surprise amongst his friends, who deplored the abandonment of the brilliant career which most assuredly was opening before him. Writing later, with regard to his decision, Mgr. Lavigerie says: "Earthly considerations had no part in my decision. I yielded to that irresistible attraction which from

my boyhood the life of a missionary ever had for me—I responded to God's call, and consented to this translation from the See of Nancy to that of Algiers which was to prove for me the beginning of so much trial, labour, suffering, contest, but at the same time of so much consolation and joy."

Long years afterwards the Cardinal used to relate a strange dream which he had a very short time before receiving Marshal McMahon's letter, a dream which at the time he regarded as a pre-sage of his future destiny. It seemed to him that he was transported to some strange far-off country where he found himself surrounded by crowds of people, all of black or copper-coloured complexion. This experience remained so deeply impressed upon his memory that twenty years afterwards he could recall every detail regarding it.

On the 20th January, 1867, the decree was issued, nominating Mgr. Lavigerie to the See of Algiers which had been raised by Pius IX a short time before into an Archbishopric.

And now at last, the goal is in sight ; his feet are set upon the right path. By how many and devious ways has he travelled to it !

CHAPTER V.

ARCHBISHOP OF ALGIERS

On the 15th May, 1867, amidst the thunderous salutes of the guns at the forts and on the war-ships in the harbour, the French frigate, *le Caton*, gaily beflagged, cast anchor before the city of Algiers. On the bridge where he had stood from the first moment that the shores of Africa came into view, was the new Archbishop, and at his side, the Abbé Bourret, his life-long friend. Before them gleaming in the dazzling radiance of the African sun lay the flat roofs, the cupolas, the minarets, the mosques of El-Baleadjada—the White City, as the Arabs call it. On the quays great crowds had gathered, people of every race, of every religion under the sun, all garbed in their distinctive national costume.

No sooner had *le Caton* cast anchor than the members of the Cathedral Chapter went on board to welcome their new Archbishop and to receive his first blessing.

When these greetings were over the Archbishop went ashore and passing slowly through the dense masses of kneeling people proceeded to the Cathedral, once an old mosque, of which he took formal possession. Having spoken a few words to

the people, the ceremony closed with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, after which the Archbishop was conducted to the episcopal palace, a beautiful Moorish building, formerly the residence of the Bey of Algiers.

And now in this the very first moment of his landing on African soil, an incident occurred, amusing indeed, but which yet revealed in a flash the strong will and imperious nature of the Archbishop. As he drew near the episcopal residence, to his great surprise all the windows and balconies were occupied by ladies dressed as if for some entertainment. Turning to those nearest to him, he enquired the meaning of this, and was informed that these ladies represented the rank and fashion of Algiers, being the wives and daughters of those holding high positions in the army, navy, and civil administration. Instantly the Archbishop stopped and made signs that the procession should halt. "Gentlemen," he said, "when all these people have left my house, I shall enter it, but not until then." Needless to say, in a very short time, the intruders had vanished.

In his first pastoral letter Mgr. Lavigerie sets forth to his priests and people the line of action which he intended to follow in the administration of his diocese. And he reveals to them something of the sentiments which animated him when even at the cost of exile from his beloved France, he resolved to devote his life to labouring in this far distant vineyard. "I shall not conceal from you," he says, "that in my weakness I shrank at first from the thought of the difficulties and the labours which lay before me, and from the suffering in-

volved in exile from my native land. But now, the sacrifice has been consummated, the tender ties which bound me to home and country have been broken. Henceforth, I belong to you alone.” He briefly outlines the history of Northern Africa ; he recalls its long-departed power and glory. “ Behold the ruins which everywhere strew the ground. In these ruins, lying one over the other, you find the trace of three great historic races ; the remains of the highest civilisation ; the tombs, the monuments, the memories of the most illustrious men, the scattered stones, all that remains of world-famous cities ; Carthage, Hippo and Utica ; Scipio, Hannibal, Marius, Cato, Jugurtha, Caesar ! What names are these ! But for us Christians, there are far more hallowed memories, precious memories of the heroes of our Faith—of their courage, their genius, their sanctity.” And then in words of golden eloquence the Archbishop evokes the glorious rôle of the Church in Africa, her seven hundred bishops, her countless churches, her monasteries, her doctors. He tells them that “ this soil of Africa was saturated with the blood of martyrs, that the whole Church rejoiced to listen whilst a Cyprian and an Augustine unfolded dogmas and doctrines, that in the hour of persecution, the courage of her delicate maidens surpassed that of the bravest men, and that the caves of her mountains, and the solitudes of her deserts were perfumed by the virtues of her solitaries. “ Too soon, alas ! were these days of triumph to be followed by days of sorrow and mourning, for Christian Africa was destined to be as celebrated for

her sorrows as she had been for her virtues and talents of her children."

The Archbishop then briefly describes the invasions of the Vandals in the fifth century, and the cruel persecutions which followed. After which, for about a century, the Church in Africa under the Roman Emperors enjoyed peace. Then the fierce followers of Mahomet descended in fanatical fury upon the hapless Christians, seized their lands and possessions, and drove them from their homes into the rocky fastnesses of the desert, where by degrees they lost their faith.

"Several centuries of woe and misfortunes" continues Mgr. Lavigerie, "passed over their heads, whilst the greatest monarchy of Christian Europe vainly endeavoured to drive the Turkish pirates from their lair and to restore to Africa the Christian faith. St. Louis, Charles V. the illustrious Cardinal Ximenes, John of Portugal, Louis XIV. of France: all in turn were forced to acknowledge the impotence of their efforts, and to admit that on these shores the courage of their best and bravest soldiers had been in vain." Throughout the long period of gloom and suffering the devotion and self-sacrifice of the heroic priests who at the risk of their lives ventured to land on these hostile shores stand forth in bright relief. And amongst the names of these apostles of charity that of St. Vincent de Paul and of his fearless sons shine forth in glowing splendour. "Oh! dear and illustrious Church of Africa," goes on the Archbishop, "May it be my happy lot to console you in your sorrows and to restore to you, even in part, your lost glory."

“ In His providence God has chosen France to make of Algeria the cradle of a great and Christian nation He is calling upon us to use those gifts which he has given to us to shed around us the light of that true civilisation which has its source and its spring in the Gospel, to carry that light beyond the desert, to the centre of the continent which is still enshrouded in the densest darkness And it is to my weak hands that God has entrusted the direction of this great work. By my teaching and example I am to lead my brethren to believe, respect, and love the precepts and commandments of His holy religion. Like the great bishops whose names make illustrious the early history of this country I am to make myself all things to all men, shrinking neither from toil nor from suffering in order to prepare the way for the complete resurrection of a land still sitting in the shadow of death—this is what, with the help of God, I must succeed in accomplishing.”

We have quoted at such length from the Archbishop's pastoral because in these eloquent words he sets before us, as no one else could, the magnitude of the work to which he has vowed himself and recalls for us so vividly the glories of the Church in Africa.

At once pressing matters connected with the administration of his new diocese obliged him to undertake the long journey to Rome, where he arrived about the end of June. Having settled his affairs with the Holy Father, the Archbishop proceeded to Paris, where he was stricken down with a serious illness, and for more than three months he was unable to return to Africa. To his

great grief whilst he lay helpless on his sick bed, the news reached him that cholera had broken out in Algeria. Absence from his flock in this hour of awful visitation filled his great heart with sorrow. But not until near the end of September was he able to return to his diocese, and by that time the terrible scourge had almost ceased its ravages.

On the voyage from Marseilles he and the party of priests and nuns who accompanied him narrowly escaped death by shipwreck in an awful storm which arose a few hours after they had left Marseilles. The sea ran mountains high, and the *Hermus*, very small vessel was tossed to and fro like a cork on the angry waters. All on board gave themselves up for lost and each moment expected the vessel, whose engine fires were extinguished and her rudder unshipped, to founder. Calm and resigned amidst the universal panic, the Archbishop exhorted all to contrition for their sins and to confidence in God ; then when it seemed that the last moment had come, he called upon all to promise, if saved from impending death, a visit of thanksgiving to the Church of our Lady, Star of the Sea, built on a high cliff overlooking the entrance to the harbour at Algiers. Scarcely had this been done when the storm began to lessen in violence, and gradually died away. The sea became calm enough to permit of temporary repairs being effected on the vessel and on the sixth day after leaving Marseilles, the *Hermus*, battered indeed, and dismantled, but with her living freight safe, cast anchor before Algiers. The vow made in that awful hour was fulfilled and afterwards

the Archbishop erected an obelisk bearing an inscription, commemorating the deliverance of the *Hermus*, which is visible a long distance at sea from Algiers.

The cholera was followed by a still more dreadful visitation of famine, resulting from the failure of the crops which was caused by drought and by the ravages of locusts. To famine succeeded typhus fever, and the unfortunate Arabs perished in thousands, victims of the apathy, the incompetence, and the pusillanimity of their rulers both native and colonial.

The policy of the French Government in Northern Africa, which it was thought would win prestige and power for France, was to prevent all efforts of Catholic missionaries to spread the light of the Gospel amongst the Arabs, efforts which they said would anger the Mahometans and lead to rebellion. Whilst thus discountenancing the spread of Christianity, Islamism everywhere received support and encouragement. In contradistinction to this policy was that of which Mgr. Lavigerie was ever the fearless champion. Ardent lover of his country as he was, he too desired to see France pre-eminent amongst the nations in glory and greatness—but whilst achieving this proud pre-eminence he would have her appear amongst these pagan tribes as the handmaid of the Lord carrying the torchlight of Faith.

CHAPTER VI.

DIFFICULTIES SURMOUNTED

The records of the awful sufferings of the natives of Algeria during the visitation of those twin scourges, famine and pestilence, even now, as we read them, thrill us with horror and pity. "The country was covered with troops of starving wanderers clothed in rags, resembling skeletons rather than human beings, who might be seen rooting up and eating the very grass of the fields to stay the pangs of hunger. No offal or refuse was too filthy to be greedily devoured, and even the carcasses of animals that had died of disease were disinterred to serve as human food. The roadside was daily strewn with the corpses of those who perished from want and exhaustion. In the course of a few months thousands of unhappy children were left orphans by the death or abandonment of their relatives, and were found straying from house to house in search of food, or dying of fever and starvation in the desolate huts."

The natives met their fate with the patient resignation, or rather apathy, engendered by Moslem fatalism. When they could no longer avert death they would uncomplainingly lie down by the wayside, and drawing their tattered gar-

ments over their face, await its end, murmuring the name of "Allah."

Not only did the Government take no steps to relieve such appalling misery, but fearing the adverse criticism of public opinion, they carefully suppressed publication of the details, and relentlessly drove the starving creatures away from the vicinity of the towns, forbidding their approach to the residences of the Europeans.

Here indeed was an opportunity for the exercise of that inexhaustible energy, that unequalled gift of organisation possessed by the Archbishop, and of that Christ-like love of his fellow-creatures which glowed like a fiery furnace.

Having appealed in vain to the authorities, the Archbishop called on all Christians throughout Europe to come to the aid of their afflicted fellow-beings. This appeal met with a noble response. Money, food, clothes poured in from all sides, and people of every class and condition offered assistance in the distribution of relief. The children whom famine and pestilence had left homeless orphans were the objects of the Archbishop's tenderest love and care. He issued directions to the priests in all parts of his diocese that these poor waifs should be sent to him as he wished to adopt them as his children. He believed that the good seed of the Gospel if sown in the virgin soil of these young hearts would fructify and bear fruit a hundred fold. "At first," he writes, "I took in one child, then ten, next twenty, and then all who came of their own accord or who had been picked up on the high roads by the priests of the diocese, acting by my orders. At

last, the number on my hands amounted to two thousand."

Two large orphanages were founded, one for boys, the other for girls, and in June, 1868, the number of orphans in these two institutions amounted to one thousand. Five hundred had already died, and nearly as many more had been claimed by their relatives on the advent of better days.

"I know I have been blamed," wrote the Archbishop, "and even laughed at for what people called my imprudence, but in spite of all the difficulties and disagreeableness of the past and the anxieties for the future I do not regret what I have done. One thing compensates me for my cares and disappointments: it is that throughout the whole of that dreadful time not one poor child who knocked at my door or at that of one of my priests was turned away.

"I seem still to see the poor little things coming to us covered with rags and dirt, frightfully emaciated, their hollow eyes, unnaturally large, bright with the weird light of the famine fever. I remember what they said and how it touched me to the heart."

To save these children from early death was not the principal end the Archbishop had in view; rather was it, he says, "to rescue them from the fatal fanaticism of the Moslem creed, to enlighten their minds by religious and moral training, to form them to habits of industry and thrift, to furnish them with the means of earning their daily bread." The means that he employed for the attainment of this end, he tells us himself:

“ We bring them up, boys and girls, to industrial pursuits. To till the ground and to gather the fruits of the earth seems to me the best employment. We can give them country life ; and agricultural labour is, in my opinion, far preferable to life in towns where waifs and strays too often yield to the temptations that beset them. If such is the case in the older countries of Europe, how much more is it so in Algeria, with a race of so childish a character as the Arabs.”

“ People told me,” he says, “ that I was attempting an impossible task, that it was beyond the power of man to implant habits of industry and toil in children bred and brought up in the vagrant life of the Arab. ‘ You will not keep one of them,’ prophesied my friend, ‘ they will everyone of them make off to their respective tribes.’ ” But the Archbishop remained firm in his belief in the power of kindness, and his faith was justified. “ Though we gave them full liberty, having no locks to the doors or rather no doors to the houses, only a very few children left us ; the rest remained of their own free will and showed no disinclination to work.”

The Archbishop tells the following touching story of a little Arab boy who certainly was a chosen child of God : “ Last May,” he relates, “ one of our orphans, a boy of twelve, of intelligence far beyond his years, fell seriously ill. He was soon unable to leave his bed, his poor little body being literally covered with sores. One day, when I went to visit the sick, the sisters pointed him out to me and I went to his bedside when he laid hold of my arm to draw me closer, I ben

down to him, for he could only speak in whispers.

“ ‘ Father,’ he said, pointing to his breast, ‘ I am all black inside here.’ ”

“ I asked him what he meant.

“ ‘ I mean my heart is black, because I am not a child of God. I want you to give me the water.’ ”

“ ‘ What water do you mean ?’ ”

“ ‘ The water of Baptism which will make my soul white in God’s sight . . . and then I shall go to heaven.’ And as he said these words, he fixed his mournful eyes upon me, and raised my hand to his lips.

“ ‘ As you wish it,’ I answered, ‘ I shall send the Father to you who will teach you more about it, and then he will baptise you.’ ” The next day, the little fellow received Baptism, and the following day, the Archbishop again visited the infirmary. “ I said to my little friend,” he writes : “ ‘ Well, so you have been baptised ?’ ” ‘ I have, Father,’ he replied, ‘ and now I want you to give me the *Bread of God*.’ ”

“ ‘ He means Holy Communion,’ said the sister.’ “ The priest spoke to him about it, and now he can talk of nothing else but receiving it at once.’ ”

“ ‘ Do you know what this *bread of God* is ?’ I asked the child.

“ ‘ Yes, Father, it is *Sidna Essa* (the Lord Jesus).’ ”

“ As may be imagined ” continues the Archbishop “ I readily granted the fulfilment of his holy desire and a few days later as he was sinking fast, the priest who had baptised him, brought him Holy Communion. The scene will never

be forgotten by those present. At the sight of the sacred Host the face of this poor little Arab—but yesterday a savage—beamed with the celestial brightness of faith and love. The beauty of his soul seemed to illumine and transform his wasted features ; he stretched out his poor thin arms towards the Heavenly Guest whom he was about to receive, and when his lips had closed upon the Bread of Angels, he lay still, looking upwards, apparently unconscious of all around him.

“ A feeling of awe stole over all present, priests, sisters, children, as with eyes filled with tears they gazed at this solemn and touching sight. I arrived a few minutes later and went to the bedside of the dying child ; his face was indeed transfigured.

“ Opening his eyes he looked at me ‘ I am going to Heaven ’ he said ‘ to see *Sidna Essa*. ’ A few minutes later he breathed his last.”

There is another story of a different kind concerning the Archbishop. He had sent to the Sister Superior of the girls’ orphanage a large number of those flowing woollen burnous or mantles in which the Arabs enshroud themselves. A very short time afterwards—the epidemic of typhus was then raging—to his great surprise the Sister asked for more of these presents. What had she done with the others, inquired the Archbishop. The Sister confessed that having no shrouds she had allowed the victims of the plague to be buried in these woollen burnous. With the swiftness of a tropical storm the floods of the Archbishop’s wrath burst on the unhappy Sister’s head. How could she have thus wasted, destroyed the goods

supplied by the charity? Did she not understand the gravity of her act of wanton waste for which she would have assuredly to answer to God. It was a terrible ordeal. And when at last the poor Sister was permitted to leave the room, she went forth trembling, weeping, not quite certain that sentence of excommunication had not been pronounced against her.

The next day, the Archbishop, whose wrath had entirely subsided, enquired for Sister Superior and was told that she was ill. He made no remark, but seemed surprised. For some days, he made inquiry daily, and each day heard that no improvement in her condition had taken place. At last, quite unexpectedly, he arrived at the orphanage and of the first Sister whom he met, he demanded, "How is Sister Superior?" "She is very bad, Monseigneur," was the answer. "What is the matter with her?" "She says, Monsigneur, that you are the cause of her illness." At this reply, the Archbishop seemed as if stunned, and for some moments did not speak. Then, he expressed a wish to see the invalid. But at the door of her cell, he paused as if afraid to enter, then advancing a few steps, he said very humbly, "Sister Paul, pardon me." The Sister, seeing the Archbishop, was frightened, not knowing what this visit portended. "My good Sister Paul," the words came in suppliant tones, "I beg of you, pardon me." The Sister, greatly embarrassed, and confused by the Archbishop's touching humility could only murmur that she it was who should ask pardon, which she did. The Archbishop gave his absolution and his blessing

to the culprit, and thus happily the affair ended.

The limits of space will not permit us to describe at length the wonderful scheme conceived and successfully carried out by the Archbishop, of founding a native Christian colony in which the the pioneer inhabitants were the young men and maidens who had been trained under his own eye to virtue and industry in his orphanages. He had from time to time as occasion offered, purchased large tracts of fertile land upon which cottages were built, each with an allotment of ground. In the centre of the village was the Church with a residence for the priest. In 1873, this native Christian colony was solemnly inaugurated under the patronage of St Cyprian, the the African Martyr.

In a delightful letter written when this Christian colony had been some years established, the Archbishop says :

“ These villages are the salvation of our children —There, they are sheltered from the dangers to which life in the towns would expose them. The Christian village is an oasis in the desert ; all around is parched by human passions. . . . I wish you could visit the village of St. Cyprian and see me surrounded by a troupe of little folk who call me ‘ Grandpapa Bishop,’ pull my cassock, and climb up on my knees to see if I have any goodies to give. I submit to all with joy, and thank God Who has made use of the charity of the faithful to give life to so many innocent creatures whom He destines to be one day the instruments of His wise designs.” The Archbishop then draws for us a charming picture of this native

colony. The houses, bright with cleanliness—one of the virtues of civilisation—are arranged in regular streets. A church, poor indeed, but also clean and spotless, is surmounted by the cross which is destined to give spiritual life to this land, so long in the shadow of death. In front of the village is a large garden of which a portion is allotted to each family. At the back is a field in which at night-time are enclosed the oxen employed in tilling the ground, and the goats and sheep that supply the inhabitants with milk and clothing. . . . Everywhere are to be seen luxuriant fields of wheat, everywhere the signs of useful labour, of active life.

“If you go,” continues the Archbishop, “to any of the Arab tribes encamped on the neighbouring mountains and ask the name of the white cottages far away on the distant plains, they will say: ‘That is the village of the sons of the Marabout,’ the marabout is myself, for this is the name that they give to Catholic priests as well as to the ministers of Mahomet. The sons of the Marabout are the orphans saved in the great famine whom the Arabs regard as my adopted children.”

The Arab tribes manifested not the least hostility to the inhabitants of these Christian villages who were their own kindred and who had, most of them, given up the creed of Mahomet, and become followers of Christ. The fact gave them not the least trouble. “The marabout has every right,” these sons of the desert would say, “to teach them his religion. Their life belongs to him, for he preserved it.” With the fatalism of the Moslem, others

would remark, "It was written." And just as the Archbishop hoped would be the case, the sight of all that Christian charity had done for the welfare of the orphans, had a most beneficial effect on those savage natures, softening their hearts, and preparing them for the reception of the good seed of the Gospel by clearing away fanatical prejudices. From far and near they came to the Christian marabout and to the sisters, bringing their sick to have their sores and ulcers, often of the most loathsome nature, dressed, and when this had been done, they would say, "It is certain all Christians will be damned, but you will not ; you are true believers ; you know the one true God."

CHAPTER VII.

THE WHITE FATHERS

In the midst of the most anxious cares of his pastoral charges, never for a moment did the Archbishop lose sight of the one great aim of his life, that for which he had resigned the pleasant surroundings of the See of Nancy, and had become an exile from his native land and all that he held dear : the evangelisation of the great continent of Africa. For him it did not suffice that in one small portion of those vast regions the Gospel should be known and preached ; he would carry the torch of Faith into darkest Africa, that almost unknown country, even yet so enshrouded in mystery. Far beyond the limits of the Algerian colony, his mind and heart ever went out to the countless multitudes dwelling in the blackest night of paganism. His apostolic soul, consumed with the fires of Christ-like charity, longed to illumine with the light of the Gospel a whole continent. Before him, indeed lay the fields ready for the harvest, but the labourers, where were they to be found ? Scarcely did the priests of the diocese of Algiers suffice for the needs thereof. Besides, knowing little or nothing of the natives, or of their language, the French Government of the

day in pursuance of a cowardly and short-sighted policy, having frowned upon any attempt of the Christians to establish relations with them, these diocesan priests were unsuited for missionary work amongst the African tribes for which a special training would be required.

True, from the year 1850, the Bishops of Algiers had from time to time projected the foundation of a society of missionaries for the conversion of the natives. But, probably because of the opposition of the Government, these projects invariably fell through. We have the testimony of Mgr. Lavigerie himself that after the famine of 1867, he could not find one priest either able or willing to undertake the management of the Arab orphanage.

One morning in the course of the year, 1868, the Archbishop, just then more than usually pre-occupied with the question of the means by which this missionary problem could be solved, received a visit from the President of the Diocesan Seminary. Père Joseph Girard, at that time seventy-five years of age, was greatly loved and venerated by the clergy of the diocese, most of whom he had trained for the service of the Sanctuary. Tall, of fine presence, with white hair and flowing white beard, his patriarchal appearance caused him to be known by the name of the "Ancient Father." Like the Archbishop, he too longed for the conversion of Africa, and cherished an ardent desire for the foundation of a society of missionaries specially devoted to that end.

On that morning he brought with him three students from the Seminary whom he introduced

to the Archbishop with the words: "Here are three young men who have come to offer themselves to you for the African Mission. With God's help this will be the beginning of the work which you and I have so much at heart."

Coming at the moment when the matter had been weighing more heavily than usual upon him, we cannot wonder that the Archbishop should regard this visit as a visible manifestation of God's Providence. Writing long afterwards of Père Girard's visit that morning, Mgr. Lavigerie says: "I see him still, kneeling with the three youths at my feet, his white head bowed down as he asked me to accept and to bless their act of self-sacrifice. I gave them my blessing, filled as I was with surprise and emotion, for I had not the slightest suspicion of such a thing. Their offer, coming as it did just when I was pondering the question so deeply and with so much anxiety, appeared to me in the light of something supernatural. I raised them up, and bade them be seated, and I questioned them at great length. As was my duty I put forward every possible objection, but they had an answer for all. At last I consented to their making trial of their vocation."

The great work was started; recruits had offered themselves, and it was reasonable to hope that their example would be followed by others. But this was not enough. How were these future apostles to be trained? God does not do things by halves. Just at that time it happened that two priests, one, a Jesuit, Fr. Francis Vincent, the other, Père Gillet, a Saint-Sulpician, had landed in Algiers in search of health. They re-

requested the Archbishop to give them some employment, of not too arduous a nature. Here, indeed, God's hand was once more manifest. The Archbishop, at once, committed the three novices to the care of these Fathers to be trained by them for their future apostolic labours, hiring a house in which the little community was duly installed.

The Archbishop regarded it as of happy augury that the infant society should be thus watched over and tended, as he said, "by a son of St. Vincent de Paul, the apostle of charity, a son of St. Ignatius, the apostle of faith, and a son of the Venerable M. Olier, the apostle of sacerdotal sanctity. In this conjuncture our missionaries have pointed out to them the three virtues most necessary for their apostolate."

The course of training lasted five years, and during that time, the number of novices increased to such an extent that removal to a larger house became necessary.

It was to Père Vincent, S. J., that the Archbishop committed the task of sketching on broad lines the plan, to be expanded later, on which the Society was to be formed, and also of clearly defining the end and aim of its institution, which was "to procure the glory of God by the personal sanctification of its members and their apostolic labours amongst the natives."

The members of the new Society were to live under one common rule, obedient to the authority of a Superior, and bound by promises or simple vows to the observance of obedience, poverty and continuance in the society.

The habit worn resembled as closely as possible the dress of the natives, and consisted of a white woollen robe and *burnous*, whence they were familiarly called "The White Fathers."

In 1875, the constitution and rules of the Congregation were specifically drawn up by the Founder, in which work he received much help from Fr. Terrasse, S.J., who was at that time director of the noviciate, and from whose spiritual guidance he expected great results. From time to time various modifications were made in these rules, but they remained substantially the same as when first formulated by Fr. Vincent, S.J. In 1885 they received the final approval of the Holy See.

Some years later, when rendering an account of the work of his Society to the Pope, Mgr. Lavigerie rendered grateful acknowledgement to the Jesuit Fathers, to whom he said he owed in great measure the training of his missionaries in apostolic zeal and virtue and unexampled self-sacrifice.

In the letter accompanying the promulgation of the rules, the Founder begins by clearly setting forth the spirit which should animate the members.

"Neither the Fathers of the Society of Jesus," wrote the Archbishop, "who preside over your training, nor I myself have ever concealed from you what lies before you. In this mission you will have much to suffer—more perhaps than in any other on the face of the earth—from poverty and fatigue, from hunger and thirst, from scorching heat, from deadly fever, and as you advance farther into those heathen lands, from the bar-

barous cruelty of their inhabitants. Let me tell you what I wrote as the future motto of our Society on the papers presented to me by one of your number, a priest from one of the most peaceful and well-ordered dioceses of France, to obtain my authorisation to say Mass. Instead of the usual formula, I wrote across them 'Endorsed for martyrdom' (*Vu pour le martyre*) and returned them to him, saying: 'Read that; are you prepared for it?' 'It is for this I have come here,' he answered.

"Such, my dear sons," he continued, "is what awaits you; if not the swift martyrdom of blood, then it will be the long, slow martyrdom of privations, of sickness, and what will be harder, the martyrdom of insult, of outrage, of blackest calumny at the hands of those who should be your protectors, since, they are, by baptism at least, Christians."

As the reward of their sufferings, their Founder promises them that superabundance of joy which St. Paul experienced in the midst of his tribulations; and he reminds them of the hundred fold promised by Jesus Christ to those who shall have left father and mother and country for His sake. And in what does this hundred fold consist? "Ah!" he cries out, "it is the joy of sharing in the most excellent of the works of God, in the work of the salvation of souls. It is that lively and overflowing joy experienced by one of your number, who writing to me lately from his poor hut in Kabylie, says: 'I am in want of everything, and yet I would not change my lot with that of the greatest King on earth.'"

From the first moment of its existence the Archbishop had desired for his Society the "cachet" of martyrdom. It was in this spirit he had chosen as its patron the Arab martyr, the venerable Geronimo, in order as he said, "that he might be an example, an encouragement, and a protection to those who should devote themselves to the conversion of his people."

The Society has not been constituted as a Religious Congregation bound by canonical vows. It is "a Society of secular priests vowed to the African Missions, living in community, and bound to one another and to the common work by their oath of consecration to these African missions, according to these rules and under obedience to Superiors." In their case the oath takes the place of vows.

Wise laws govern admission into the Society. Every candidate must be at least fully sixteen years of age, and have finished his classical studies as far as philosophy. His noviceship will last two years, during which he will be wholly occupied in the study of the native tongues, and will apply himself to the correction of his faults and the acquiring of the apostolic virtues. Those who are already priests may pass the second year of their noviceship in a House of Studies belonging to the Society or on the Mission; those who are not priests and who have not yet gone through their ecclesiastical studies must apply themselves for four years to the study of theology and philosophy in a House of the Society. After two years probation, the novice is permitted by the Superior-General and his Council to take the

oath, and "to consecrate himself on the holy Gospels henceforth and until death to the work of the African Missions."

The virtue which the Founder exacts at any cost from his subject is obedience, absolute, unquestioning obedience. He prescribes to his missionaries "the reading of the letter on this point addressed by St. Ignatius to the members of his Society. This letter is to be printed at the end of the rules; during the period of noviceship it is to be explained and at the annual General Retreat it is to form the subject of the particular examen." In all that regard their dwellings, their dress, and their food, the missionaries must, as far as possible, lead the same simple life as the African natives. "Except in case of sickness, they must sleep on a mat laid on boards or on the bare ground."

"We must assume as much as possible," writes Mgr. Lavigerie, "the manners of the natives; we must speak their language, wear their garments, eat their food, in conformity to the example of the Apostle. 'I became all things to all men, that I might save all.'"

Well aware that hasty and ill-considered action would be productive of great harm, and that the least imprudence on the part of even one Missionary might nullify all efforts to convert the people, the Founder strictly enjoined the observance of great caution. Before openly preaching the Gospel, the Fathers must try by kindness and charity to win the confidence of the natives and to remove their prejudices, and thus prepare their hearts for the sowing of the good seed.

It was a fundamental rule of the Society that the number of missionaries sent to any mission should never be less than three, also that their first act should be to establish a pharmacy and a school.

“Our school and our pharmacy,” writes one of the Fathers, “are our great strongholds. Whenever possible, while ministering to bodily ailments, we strive to remedy the sickness of the soul.

“Very often the maladies from which these poor people suffer are the results of their vices. In such cases we speak to them of an offended God, of the punishment which sin deserves. And we exhort them to try to overcome those faults, which even in this world bring upon us the punishment of disease and suffering. We always receive the same answer : ‘O marabout, truth speaks by your lips, God inspires you with wisdom. But the sons of Adam are weak and sinful. May God have mercy on us !’

“To which we always reply in the words of our Lord : ‘Go and now sin no more.’

“ When they return to their own people these poor Arabs loudly proclaim all that the Christian marabout has done for them and thus our influence is rapidly extending.”

Having placed the foundations of his Society on a solid basis and definitely settled its rules and constitutions, the Archbishop considered that the time had come for the carrying out of a design long conceived and planned, namely the handing over to the charge of the Society of the numerous good works of which he was the originator in the

Archdiocese. He knew that works and institutions which are dependent on one individual often die with him, and he was anxious, before death should call him away, to ensure the permanence of all these various charitable institutions which owed their existence to him.

The consecration of a church attached to the Mother House of his Society, at which were present nearly all the missionaries gathered together from the remotest parts of the Continent for their annual retreat, gave him his opportunity. After Mass, in an eloquent discourse he made known his intention of constituting his spiritual sons the guardians of the charitable works which he had founded and organised. Turning to the Fathers, he said, "Now, my conscience will be at rest. I can die in peace. My works will not die, for I have placed them in your hands, you will carry them on, with you they will increase and multiply. I know that my orphans will be cared for, that the poor whom we have relieved will not be forsaken, that the souls who cried to me for help, will not cry to you in vain. . . ."

Just a few months before this discourse, on the 18th April, 1874, the remains of the great traveller, Livingstone had been committed to the tomb with every mark of honour in Westminster Abbey. The Archbishop paid a glowing tribute to the memory of this brave man "who had given his life in the effort to lift a corner of that veil of densest darkness which covers the African world, and to prepare the way for the abolition of barbarous customs, and whose courage and devotion had been so signally honoured by the English

nation." "But you, my dear sons," he continued, addressing the missionaries, "no such honours will be yours, nor do you desire them. You are urged by no thought of your own interest or glory. You will want bread, a shelter; you will die ignored by the world, perhaps in fearful tortures. This is all I promise you. But you know—and that is enough—that you serve a Master who can proportion the reward to the merit of His servants.

"Go forth then in the name of God and with His help. Go to care for the little ones, to relieve those who suffer, to console those who mourn, to heal those who are sick.

" I shall never cease to pray that God may maintain within your souls the pure and ardent flame of charity which He Himself has kindled therein."

The Founder's desire that his Society might have the privilege of witnessing unto death for Christ's sake was destined to receive speedy fulfilment. In December, 1875, whilst the Society was yet in its infancy, three of the missionaries with the Archbishop's consent set out on the long and dangerous journey to Timbuctoo, that great trading centre of the Sahara so little known to Europeans, but which so many travellers have tried to reach, only to lose their lives in the attempt. From the day of the departure of the heroic little band nothing was ever heard of their movements. They vanished as completely as if the desert sands had engulfed them. After some considerable time vague rumours began to circulate amongst the natives that the three missionaries had been mur-

dered in the desert when almost in sight of their destination. Shortly afterwards these reports were confirmed by some ostrich hunters who had found the martyrs' remains quite close to Timbuctoo.

Beyond the fact that they were beheaded, and that the bodies, when found, were lying side by side, nothing more was ever known of the particulars of their deaths.

The Society of the Missionaries of Africa—to give it the proper and distinctive name—being now fully launched, the Archbishop turned his thoughts to the establishment of a congregation of missionary sisters, similar in spirit and aim.

Such a foundation he considered indispensable to the success of the African Missions. In Africa, more than in any other part of the world, there is no one better suited than consecrated women for a mission which is first and foremost, one of charity.

“Kept in the strictest seclusion, closely guarded from all intercourse with the world and regarded as inferior beings, Mahometan women could not be approached except by women; they alone could visit them in sickness, and in sorrow; instruct them in the consoling truths of Christianity, raise them from their degraded position and teach them the true dignity of Christian womanhood.”

On the 8th September, 1869, eight young girls from Brittany landed at Algiers, accompanied by the Abbé Le Mauff whom the Archbishop had sent to France in search of postulants. The band of exiles were received at Kouba by the Sisters of

St. Charles who were to train them in their new life. Can we wonder if on that first evening in the far African land these poor young girls—two of them were but sixteen years of age—should feel their courage evaporate? The Sister Superior introduced them into the house allotted to them facing the Arab orphanage and showed them their little cells, bare of furniture, and divided one from the other by the slightest of wooden partitions; then she withdrew and left them alone for a short time.

Poor exiles! an awful longing for home filled their hearts. They were so lonely; so strange; they felt so weak, so helpless, that they asked themselves what had they done, of what use could they be in that strange land? Well, they were satisfied to let God do with them as He would, but they found it hard to realise that out of such poor weak material a religious Congregation could be formed.

But it is precisely out of the weak things of this world that God fashions the instruments for His work. Before long, the Archbishop's wisdom and foresight were fully manifested in the success of this new foundation. The tiny seed took root in the African soil, and bore fruit a hundred fold. So much good did these gentle, hard working Sisters effect by the example of their kindness, their self denial, their courage and their devotion to the poor, the sick, and the suffering, that it was said that the results of their labours amongst the Arabs exceeded what the Fathers could effect. The unbelievers regarded these sisters as super-

natural beings and held them in the deepest veneration.

The Archbishop, once, when preaching in aid of the missions, spoke of the Sisters as follows: "I have seen them surrounded by a mingled crowd of men and children, Christians and Mahometans, all crying to them for help, begging them to cure their ailments, to relieve their wants, kissing with the greatest veneration the habit they wear. I heard one of our sisters say, that one occasion when passing along a street in a busy Eastern city, she was stopped by an old man, a Turk, who respectfully, and at the same time with curiosity, said 'Tell me, sister, when you came down from heaven, did you wear the dress you are wearing now?'"

Ten years after their first foundation, the Archbishop definitely formed them into a Congregation of Missionary Sisters, giving them a fixed Rule and Constitutions and the name of Sisters of our Lady of African Missions.

CHAPTER VIII.

A MOMENTOUS UNDERTAKING

When committing to the care of his Society all those charitable works in the Arch-diocese of which he was the originator, Mgr. Lavigerie closed his address in these words :

“ Mission work in Algeria is far from being the chief, still less it is the exclusive object of your ambition. The end and aim of our Apostolate is the evangelisation of Africa, of the whole of Africa, of that almost impenetrable interior in whose dark depths are the last hiding places of a most brutal barbarism, where cannibalism still prevails, and slavery in its most degrading forms. To this work you have consecrated yourselves by solemn vow and promise.”

Humanly speaking, the obstacles to this work were so tremendous as to render it seemingly impossible of accomplishment.

Writing of these difficulties the Archbishop says: “ There is not a single spot along the shores washed by the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, and the Indian Ocean, where we do not find the footsteps of the messengers of God’s mercy to the poor degraded sons of Cham. But although in all the countries bordering the Ocean we find

numerous bodies of Apostolic Missionaries engaged in spreading the light of the Gospel, far different is it with the interior of the Dark Continent, which has hitherto seemed impossible of access. From time to time individual travellers have tried to penetrate into the depths of this mysterious land, but nearly all have perished in the attempt to lift the veil which enshrouds those unknown regions."

But meanwhile God was shaping the course of events in such a fashion as would render possible the realisation of His servants' cherished desire. To the want of united sustained action was due the failure of all efforts to penetrate into the interior of Africa. Each explorer acted on his own initiative, and went his own road, independent of all others. To remedy this waste of heroic effort, and in many cases of life, the King of the Belgians suggested the formation of an International Society, and at the opening Conference held in Brussels under his presidency, in 1876, he laid before the members a most effective plan of action. In his inaugural address the King explained the aims of the proposed association, of which, first and foremost, was the abolition of slavery, "the open sore of the world, the abominable traffic in human merchandise which is the disgrace of the age in which we live."

But for the success of such a scheme, it was necessary, the King pointed out, to have "the co-operation of the masses, the support of members, to appeal to the sympathy, the benevolence of the public."

The African Society of Brussels at once achieved

success. All Christendom responded to the King's appeal. Money poured in, and from every country scientists, explorers, soldiers, volunteered their services in the cause of the persecuted tribes of Central Africa. A carefully considered plan of campaign was drawn up in which no detail was omitted necessary to the success of the crusade against the slave hunters.

In this International Association Mgr. Lavigerie was quick to recognise a most powerful aid to the establishment of missions in Central Africa.

To the ordinary observer, it would not appear at first sight that the programme of such an Association in which religion had no part could have much bearing on missionary work. "These details," says the Archbishop, speaking of the Society's scheme, "may appear foreign to my object, but in reality, they form part of it. . . . The enterprise of the Conference of Brussels will be the means of bringing new light and new life to whole tribes and races of mankind. . . . In opening out a route across the equatorial regions for the explorer and the trader an opening has been made for the messenger of the Gospel, and thus all unconsciously the International Association has achieved a glorious work. . . . Whilst emphatically disclaiming all interest in or connection with any religion, the Association, far from opposing the preaching of the Gospel, was quite willing to give help and protection to the missionaries, but it was distinctly laid down that Religion should have no place in its counsels whose efforts were directed solely to the advancement of science, commerce and manufacture. . . ."

The Archbishop drew up a memorial for presentation to the Holy Father, Pius IX, in which he set forth at great length the aims and the working scheme of the International Association. In words of impassioned eloquence he urged upon the Pope the necessity for the Church's immediate action. "The Protestants," he wrote, "are already in the field. At Zanzibar the Protestant missionaries are preparing to advance into Equatorial Africa, and their plans are laid. The Protestant missions are rich, ours are poor, but because of our poverty shall we hold back? I do not believe," he continues, with sublime faith, "that the question of money is ever an insurmountable obstacle to those works which are really of God. Long experience has taught me that God provides all that is necessary for His missionaries. But one thing is needed, the faith which is like the grain of mustard seed. With this faith, according to our Lord's promise, we can move mountains, mountains of gold as well as the others."

In the beginning of January, 1878, this memorial was presented to the Pope, copies being also sent to all the Cardinals. The Pope, over whom death had already cast his shadow, at once realised the importance of the situation. It was a question, says the Archbishop "of the fate of an immense continent, a continent almost as large as the whole of Europe, and inhabited by some hundred millions of souls. At one time, this might have seemed an exaggeration, but the reports of the most recent travellers had furnished information wholly at variance with existing ideas regarding

Equatorial Africa, which, according to their accounts, was not a barren desert, the grave of every living thing, but a region abounding in beautiful scenery, rich in natural resources, and densely populated. The climate in many parts is described as mild and salubrious owing to the high table lands in the neighbourhood of the great lakes and the lofty mountains, some of which are capped with eternal snow.”

In obedience to the Holy Father's commands, Cardinal Franchi, Prefect of the Propaganda, took counsel with the Superiors, amongst them Mgr. Lavigerie, of the various African Missionary Societies, as to the best means of carrying out the Pope's wishes. Finally it was to the Society founded by the Archbishop that the Holy Father assigned the task of taking the initiative in this tremendous and most perilous undertaking.

With what joy and enthusiasm the Fathers of the Society received the news, their Founder has himself recorded. “Three of their number,” he writes, “had already shed their blood in the Sahara. The remembrance of this, far from discouraging their brethren, inspired them with holy envy, and urged them to fresh emulation.”

On the 7th of February, 1878, the long and eventful reign of Pius IX came to an end and the venerable Pontiff entered into everlasting rest. It was thus reserved for his successor, Leo XIII., to complete the work which he had initiated by signing the decree prepared by Propaganda, in which was embodied the plan traced by Pius IX. for the establishment of four large vicariates in the region of the Equatorial Lakes: Nyanza,

Tanganyika, and the Northern and Southern portions of the Upper Congo. To Mgr. Lavigerie was confided the charge of these vicariates.

In March, 1878, the first detachment of missionaries, ten in number, set out on their dangerous expedition, of these five were destined for Nyanza, and five for Tanganyika. On reaching Zanzibar, the starting point for the long journey into the interior, one of the Fathers wrote as follows :—" We are now going to make our final purchases, and to pack into bales the outfit which we brought from Algiers. Then, committing ourselves to the protection of our Heavenly Father, we go forth to proclaim the knowledge of God to those people who have lain so long in the shadow of death, sunk in the grossest idolatry and barbarism. A new life is beginning for us ; we are breaking new ground. Weak and unworthy as we are, we are yet the first who since the foundation of the Church have come to publish the name of God in this savage and almost unknown country. Ours is a sublime mission, but also a terrible one. To God we offer beforehand for the success of our great work all the trials, privations and sufferings, and even the sacrifice of our lives should He think fit to require it of us."

From Zanzibar the missionaries in a native *dhow* crossed to Bagamoyo on the African mainland. Here a caravan had just arrived from the interior, and thus the Fathers were able to secure the negro porters who were only too willing to enter into an engagement for the return journey.

Travelling in the interior of Africa is a very difficult and most expensive proceeding, as owing to

the nature of the country all personal baggage and requisites for the journey have to be carried by native porters, a great number of these being required, as in addition to the *pagazis* or porters, an equal number of *askaris* or guards must be hired and armed, these being necessary for the protection of the party, as well as to maintain discipline amongst the carriers.

On the 19th June, 1878, the pioneer band of missionaries left Bagamoyo for their far distant posts, knowing nothing of the way thither nor of what dangers and suffering lay before them. Not for many months after their departure was any news heard of the travellers. Swallowed in the depths of the mysterious interior, the silence of the grave surrounded their movements.

At last when the suspense had become almost insupportable word came to the Archbishop that the Fathers had reached their respective stations, those for Tanganyika arriving there in January, 1879; the others did not reach Nyanza until the following June, twelve months after leaving Bagamoyo. They had suffered much on the journey from overpowering heat, from mosquitoes, and from constant attacks of malaria. Sometimes the way led through virgin forests where with difficulty they could make their way. Strange birds of gorgeous plumage and countless monkeys which set up a deafening chatter at sight of these intruders seemed the only inhabitants of these dense forests; sometimes they passed through fields of maize and sugar cane, and again they had to force a path through great prairies, where the grass was so high as to meet far above their

heads. On the way the missionaries for Tanganyika suffered the loss of their Superior, the saintly Fr. Pascal, who died of fever. Secretly and in much fear of discovery by the natives through whose territory they were then passing, they dug a grave in which they laid the mortal remains of their loved Superior to rest until the Resurrection. At Taboura was the parting of the ways for the two bands, one going northwards to Lake Nyanza, the other proceeding west to Tanganyika. situated about 250 miles from Nyanza. The party for Nyanza were the first to depart, the other being delayed by illness for some time at Taboura.

After a trying journey of seven weeks to Lake Tanganyika, the Fathers first took up their abode in Ujiji, but, finding it wholly unsuitable for missionary work owing to the supreme influence exercised by the Mussulmans over the natives, they removed further northward along the shores of the Lake, finally taking up their quarters in the fertile region of Urundi. It is pleasant to record that whilst at Ujiji, the missionaries received much kindness from those in charge of the Protestant Church Missionary Station.

Writing from Urundi to Mgr. Lavigerie, Fr. Deniand, who succeeded Fr. Pascal as superior, says: "The country is broken and undulating, traversed from north to south by a chain of mountains. It is fertile and thickly populated; the fields are well-cultivated, and the manioc plant, sweet potatoes, and many of our European vegetables, together with the banana tree furnish ample food for the natives. They are a simple

race but so timid that they fly in terror the moment we appear. Urundi is much healthier than Ujiji, and best of all there are no Arabs, not even one.

"We are getting on slowly ; our house or rather our hut is finished ; it is nothing more than a shed, walled in and thatched with straw. One side is left open to admit light and air, at night it is closed by mats. . . . We have goats, sheep and shall soon have cows. We have sowed large fields with wheat and rice which we brought with us, but we are not very skilful in this kind of work.

"The task to which we devote all our energy is the training of some children whom we have rescued from slavery. This is a good beginning for our mission, and we have great hopes of these boys who are very docile, and seem to have no serious faults. Our only fear is that they will run away, as two have already done for no reason that we can discover. We have now three smaller boys whom we shall teach to read, and four bigger ones who, we hope, will in a few years, form the nucleus of a future Christian village in Equatorial Africa. There is no lack of land ; any number of kingdoms could be set up here without any fear of rival claimants."

It was the Kingdom of God which these good Fathers desired to establish, and so far their beginnings promised well for their realisation of their hopes.

From the mission of Victoria, Nyanza, the reports were still more encouraging. . . . In their journey to this distant station, the Fathers who, under the leadership of Fr. Lavinhac had been

the first to leave Taboura, suffered terribly, and on several occasions narrowly escaped death at the hands of the savage tribes through whose lands they passed.

Lake Nyanza, which is really an inland sea, was discovered in 1858, by Speke ; in 1875, it was fully explored by Stanley. Here in this elevated region is situated the kingdom of Uganda, the largest and most populated of the States in the Lake region, and at that time numbered three millions on inhabitants. The king then reigning in Uganda was Mtesa, of whom Stanley wrote :

“ The king of Uganda seems to me a man who, under good influence, would do more for Central Africa than could be done in fifty years of preaching the Gospel without the help of such a powerful king.” Mtesa was a man of commanding presence, and of great intelligence. His subjects, according to Stanley, were of superior race and much attached to their ruler, of whom they were very proud.

On their arrival the Fathers were conducted along a wide avenue to a very large building somewhat resembling a farm-house, situated on the top of a hill, and surrounded by a number of large dwellings hidden in groves of fig and banana trees. The hill, covered with habitations, was called Puoubaga, and constituted the capital of Ugandi. The principal dwelling was the King's palace.

Mtesa received the Fathers most graciously. With admirable forethought Mgr. Lavigerie had provided the missionaries with a box of the discarded uniforms of high officials, purchased from a dealer in second-hand clothes in Paris. These

garments, though no longer in their pristine freshness, were still sufficiently gorgeous with gold lace and embroidery to delight the heart of barbaric royalty when presented by the missionaries. The King would not be outdone in generosity. "Mtesa," wrote Fr. Lavinhac, "has provided for our material wants with the utmost liberality. He has given us about an acre of good land planted with bananas, and thirty oxen. He is also providing materials and workmen for the building of a house large enough to accommodate us all. According to native custom this house will be built with wooden stakes, the interstices being filled with reeds and grass, only in its form, which is more or less European, will our house differ from the native huts."

As well as providing for their material wants, Mtesa granted the Fathers full permission to preach the Gospel, and at that time, he manifested a preference for the teaching of these Catholic missionaries. Very quickly the Fathers acquired sufficient knowledge of their language to enable them to converse with the natives. As at Tanganyika, a school was opened for the negro children rescued from slavery. A class was also formed for the instruction of the adults to which crowds flocked. Already, in September, 1879, Fr. Lavinhac could write to the Archbishop that amongst these idolators God had found some disciples. On Easter Sunday, 1880, four catechumens received Baptism, and on Whit-Saturday, four more recruits had joined the little band of Christians, two of these being soldiers in Mtesa's army.

The Fathers undertook the care of the sick and

effected some very remarkable cures, which they attributed to Our Lady's intercession.

Encouraged by the success of these first missions, and in response to their urgent appeal for more helpers, the Archbishop organised and sent forth a second detachment of missionaries to the number of twelve, who were accompanied by six Pontifical Zouaves who had volunteered to act as guides to the caravan from Zanzibar to the Great Lakes; of these, four were Belgians and two Scotchmen. This second contingent did not meet with the same success as the pioneer band. Writing to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Mgr. Lavigerie says:—"Less than a year after their departure, eight of them had already laid down their lives. Four priests and three Zouaves were carried off by African fever, and a lay brother was killed during an attack made by robbers upon the caravan. Sadly diminished in numbers, and worn out by fatigue, sickness and want of food, the second band of missionaries reached Taboura. They had found it almost impossible to procure provisions, and they owed it to the kindness of some Protestant missionaries that they had not died of starvation.

At Taboura, as before, the Fathers divided into two parties, one going to Tanganyika, the other to Nyanza. This access of strength, small as it was, enabled Fr. Lavinhac, the Superior of the Nyanza Mission, to extend his work along the shores of the Lake; he also established a permanent mission and an orphanage at Taboura. which, from its central position as a means of communication between the coast and the great Lakes, is a

place of much importance, besides which the passing through of the numerous gangs of slaves on their way to the coast, afforded the Fathers of the Mission opportunities of rescuing many of the poor negro children from their cruel captors.

Soon after the arrival of the second party of Fathers, the Mission at Tanganyika suffered a terrible disaster. Enraged at the efforts of the Fathers to rescue the negro children from the slave-hunters, a neighbouring tribe, largely engaged in the slave traffic, descended suddenly upon the Station at Tanganyika, and surrounding the Fathers' dwelling, slaughtered by shooting with poisoned arrows, all who happened to be there. As rapidly as they had come, these savages vanished, leaving their victims, amongst them Fr. Deniand, the Superior, lying dead or dying.

The news of this cruel martyrdom did not chill the apostolic zeal of the White Fathers in Algeria, nay, rather it seemed to render it still greater. On the 6th November, 1880, the third band, numbering fifteen Fathers, left Algiers on board the *British India* for Zanzibar, en route for the Great Lakes. "In two years," wrote Mgr. Lavigerie, "the Society of Missionaries of Algeria has sent forty-three Fathers into Equatorial Africa. The work of the Apostolate has begun. The Word of God is being preached. The first faithful of these infant Churches have been baptised. Their first Apostles have watered the good seed with their blood. Our Lord Himself has prepared the way for His work which He will accomplish. . . . Courage."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CARDINALATE

The early days of 1882 brought much sorrow and serious apprehension for the future, to the Archbishop. On the 11th January the terrible news reached him that three of his missionaries had been attacked by hostile natives and cruelly put to death. The massacre had taken place on the 21st December of the previous year, the Fathers being surprised late at night whilst asleep in their tent. It was a repetition of the massacre of the martyrs of 1876.

Immediately on receipt of the mournful intelligence, Mgr. Lavigerie, who was then at Carthage, summoned the missionaries to the Chapel and there in a voice broken by tears, in a few words, told what had happened.

"But," he said in conclusion, "my children, we must not mourn as those who have no hope. Let us rather thank our Lord for the honour that He has conferred on our little Society in choosing some of its members for martyrdom." And then, he intoned the *Te Deum*.

In a letter addressed to all the members of the Society, after he had given an account of the massacre the Archbishop ends thus: "And now,

let us be generous enough to restrain our grief. I have asked you to sing the *Te Deum* ; let us do so with our whole hearts. Give thanks to God that He has called your brethren to join the glorious choir of the Apostles :—*Te gloriosus Apostolorum Chorus !* Praise and thank Him that because by their devotedness they are an honour to their Church and to their country that is also ours : *Te per orbem terrarum sancta confitetur Ecclesia !* Let us implore Him that the shedding of their blood may obtain the deliverance of His poor people from the darkness of paganism : *Famulis tuis subveni quos pretioso sanguine redemisti.* And laying aside all anxiety about difficulties and trials, let us beg of Him to confirm the unalterable confidence that we have in Him : *In te Domine, speravi, non confundar in æternum !* ”

But whilst rejoicing in the glorious spirit of self-sacrifice that animated the members of his Order, Mgr. Lavigerie feared that these truly apostolic men in their burning zeal for souls might be led to disregard all precautionary measures to ensure their safety. Hence, in this letter he reminds the missionaries of the counsels of prudence that our Lord gave to His disciples. “ If He forewarns His disciples of the persecutions that await them, at the same time He counsels them to fly from the danger which threatens them, not to rush into it. . . . I am writing to you from Carthage, only a few steps from the spot where St. Cyprian was put to death. Truly is he great amongst the martyrs, and yet, he always avoided danger until that day when he felt bound

in conscience to restore fortitude and courage to his flock by testifying with his blood to Jesus Christ. You must act as he did, my dear children. . . . Already in less than ten years, ten of your brethren have shed their blood in the interior of our poor Africa. The experiences of the past must serve to temper the zeal of their successors with patience. Ah! my dear children, in those days of cowardice and universal selfishness, how happy is that Society whose members are so filled with the apostolic spirit, with such zeal for souls that they have to be restrained from rushing into martyrdom. Such generous sentiments are worthy of men's admiration, and of the blessing of God Himself. But I should be wanting in my duties as your father and your director if I did not moderate these transports, and if I did not forbid you, even under pain of sin if necessary, to expose yourself voluntarily to certain danger. . . . There will be only too many occasions when all human prudence will be of no avail; but, at least, you and I, we shall have done our duty."

On the 19th March, 1882, Mgr. Lavigerie received from Cardinal Jacobini the official notification of his approaching elevation to the Cardinalate, in the place of the deceased Cardinal Pie. It will be of interest to recall that Cardinal Pie had long before predicted that Mgr. Lavigerie would one day receive the same honour.

"No matter," he said to his friend, "what your Grace may think, the ardent zeal with which you have combated heathen barbarism has won for you a dignity to which you are entitled

by every right. Since divine Providence has ordained that I should be called before you to this dignity, justice requires that the same divine Providence should not delay in raising you to that high office in which you should have preceded me."

Having thanked the Holy Father for this signal mark of his favour, Mgr. Lavigerie made known to the Cardinal Secretary of State that being in Tunis he wished to receive the Papal envoy who would bring him the red skull-cap in token of his coming investiture at St. Louis.

The setting of the scene would add considerably to the solemnity of the event, and well he who was the central figure in it, understood this. The Papal envoy, Count Cecchini, one of the Noble Guard, reached Carthage on Monday in Holy Week, 3rd April, 1882. He was received at St. Louis by the Archbishop, to whom he handed the Papal Letters constituting him a Prince of the Church.

On Low Sunday, 16th April, the Archbishop, surrounded by the members of the Chapter and all the high civil and military officials, received from Count Cecchini the red skull cap. In reply to the few words spoken by the Papal Envoy in fulfilling his mission, the Cardinal said that it was as the doyen of the French Archbishops that he had been chosen by the Supreme Pontiff as the recipient of such great honour. "But," he continued, "in bestowing this great dignity the thoughts of Leo XIII. went out far beyond my humble person. It is Africa, the only part of the world hitherto unrepresented in the sacred

College, that the Holy Father would honour. I am overwhelmed by the greatness of the dignity conferred upon me, but I am stricken even yet more to the dust when I contemplate those ruins of Carthage, that whilst they speak to us of the grandeur of the past, speak even more eloquently of the vanity of all human greatness."

He recalls all the past power and splendour of Carthage. He evokes the memories of the glories of the early days of Christianity that yet cling to those everlasting hills.

Then turning to the Papal envoy, he addresses him, "You will tell Leo XIII. Monsieur le Comte, that you have seen the cross uplifted above this ancient citadel of Carthage. You will tell him that a temple, a house of prayer, has been raised on it to the memory of the most pious of our Kings. Finally, you will tell him that you have seen gathered around their Pastor Christians of every nation of old Europe, and that in his name I preach to all charity, union and peace."

The general rejoicing came to a close in Tunis. Crowds flocked to the railway station to greet the Cardinal on his arrival. As soon as he appeared he was surrounded by the people who cheered frantically. In their enthusiasm they took the horses from his carriage, and in spite of his remonstrances, drew him in triumph to the Cathedral, where great crowds had also assembled. Scarcely could he speak even a few words; he was completely overwhelmed by this wonderful demonstration of the people's love and veneration. At night the city was illuminated. Alas! this happy day had a

somewhat unfortunate ending. The Cardinal loved to relate the untoward incident which marred its close, serving as it did, as an illustration of how suddenly reverses may cloud earthly joys and pleasures. With two Bishops who had taken part in the day's proceedings, he was returning that evening to Carthage, the three occupying the one carriage. They had already traversed half of the three leagues that lie between the two cities when the accident occurred. Night had fallen, and the roads, owing to torrential rain, were veritable quagmires. The negro coachman who had feasted well but not wisely lost his way, and his head also, finally landing the carriage in a bog. The three occupants had to alight in the pouring rain, and in their beautiful robes assist the coachman to extricate the horses from the sea of mud. But, their united efforts were of no avail. At last the three dignitaries of the Church, leaving the carriage, the horses, and the coachman in the mire, returned on foot to Tunis, arriving in a condition more easily imagined than described.

On the 3rd May, the Cardinal took his departure for Paris, en route to Rome, there to receive from the hands of the Pope the Cardinal's hat. During his sojourn in Paris, the Chapter of Bayonne sent him their congratulations. In his reply he said that their letter of good wishes coming from the land that he so loved was as refreshing to him as the oasis in the desert is to the thirsty traveller. Time did not permit him to visit his relatives and friends, but he sent his blessing to their children. In a letter to his aged aunt, Madame Julien, he

writes : " In truth, I am a real patriarch. If you saw me with my perfectly white beard in my pontifical robes, you would be frightened. Those who do not know me give me seventy-five years of age, thus your nephew, in appearance at least, is older than you are yourself. But what a life I have led from fifteen years of age, and now life is harder than ever. If only my dear mother could have foreseen at the time when her son's sole wish was to be a country curate what he was really destined to be. "

Sometime afterwards, this much loved aunt having fallen seriously ill, we find the Cardinal, at that time very far away, writing to her, as the boy of long ago might have written : " If you only knew how I longed to go to you at Bayonne and to bring you my purple robes that you might bless them, just as I should have brought them to my mother, your dearly loved sister. But it could not be. To-day, I am no longer my own master, not even for a moment. I belong to the Church, to France, I must serve them as well as ever I can to the very end, in return for what they have done for me. Not without great labour, sometimes even at the cost of much suffering, can I accomplish this. But in the testimony of one's conscience and the hope of eternal life we find reward for the fulfilment of our duty. Adieu, my dear Aunt, as a priest, from afar, I send you my blessing. Do you also send me, alas ! from afar, your blessing in the name of my mother. "

He was never again to see the aunt who was so dear to him, in this world.

In October of that same year, the Cardinal learned that the aged Bishop from whom he had received the sacrament of Confirmation and who had sent him to the Seminary at Laressore had passed to his eternal reward. In a beautiful letter written to some clerical friends at Bayonne he says : " What a strange thing ! That bishop who seemed to me forty years ago when he sent me to the Seminary, already such an old man, appeared to me afterwards to grow young according as I advanced in life and that the ardour of so many suns had bleached my hair white. The day came when I felt that I was old as he was. I told him so when I saw him the last time I visited my native land some years ago. I met him walking by the sea-shore near the mouth of our Adour accompanied by his faithful Vicar-General, M. Franchisteguy, his faithful Ernest and his old carriage, the three having passed into a legend in the diocese. Now, the Bishop had confirmed me, but it was M. Franchisteguy who had prepared me for my First Communion, and who really decided my vocation for the priesthood. On meeting them, all these memories came back to me. . . . I reminded them of these early days and like myself the recollection of them moved them deeply. . . . Alas, what regrets the death of these two early friends have caused me. How I wish that I could have met them once more and recalled to them the same memories. This time the meeting would have been still more memorable. . . .

" During these last months of my sojourn in France for a moment I cherished the hope that

meeting might take place. But you know the exactions—often cruel—of public life and of the episcopal ministry.

“That moment I could not find even to visit my dying brother and to embrace him for the last time.

“But if their little would-be country curate, their child of long ago, can no longer offer these two saintly old men their homage of his filial affection, he would at least, even from this distant land, lay it on their tomb. . . . If all those children who have been confirmed by our aged bishop during the forty years of his episcopacy united in prayer for his soul, how quickly he must have entered into the glory of God. He has, I feel sure, entered therein already, and it is there in that glory that I am moved to invoke him that the God who in His justice has rewarded the merits of his long years of virtues may deign to look on me in mercy.”

CHAPTER X.

RECONSTRUCTION OF CARTHAGE

In the plan of this little book the discussion of foreign politics does not properly enter. Therefore, inasmuch as it concerns the principal figure of our sketch, we shall but very briefly review the political relations existing between Italy and France, which led in 1880 to the establishment of the French Protectorate in Tunis. This was to extend to the very borders of the French colony of Algeria, and also to be in close proximity to Sicily. Naturally, to secure the preponderance of influence and favour at the court of the Bey of this very large portion of African territory was a matter of much importance to both Italy and France. To gain the desired end, for a long time a diplomatic struggle had gone on between the representatives of the two powers, until at last, urged on by the Italian President the Bey was indiscreet enough to affront France, upon which the French Government took the decisive step of entering into military occupation of the province. Perceiving his error, and regretting the false step he had taken, the Bey at once climbed down, and made amicable overtures to France, with the result that ratified by solemn treaty

the French Protectorate was established in Tunis.

Just before these events, Mgr. Suter, an Italian Capuchin who filled the See of Tunis, resigned his episcopal charge owing to the infirmities of extreme old age. There was much contention between the French and Italian colonists with regard to his successor. The French, in view of the establishment of the French Protectorate, claimed, as their right, the nomination of a French bishop, whilst the Italians, who formed a large and important part of the colony, claimed equal right to a bishop of their own nationality. The Pope, unwilling to increase the existing dissensions, deferred the appointment of a bishop, in the hope that time would soften and remove prejudice. Meanwhile he appointed Mgr. Lavigerie as Administrator Apostolic to rule over the affairs of the diocese.

The Archbishop already bore the heavy burden of the Archdiocese of Algeria. He was the Founder of a new order of missionaries over which he exercised the most constant care and supervision ; and as Vicar Apostolic, he was responsible for four immense Vicariates created in Equatorial Africa. Remembering all this, ordinary minds might fail to understand how one so heavily burthened, could take upon himself the additional care and responsibilities of a post of extreme difficulty. But, where the interests of his divine Master and of His Church were concerned, no burthen was too heavy, no labour too great, for the Archbishop of Algiers. Naturally, as we know of old, he delighted in action, in the stir, the press and throng of life's arena. He loved to grapple with difficulties, and

to fight and overcome adversaries. Such he was in youth, such he will be to the end of life. How often as we trace the footsteps of this illustrious Archbishop do we seem to hear, borne to us across the years, the echo of a boyish voice proclaiming that life held no greater ambition for him than to be a country parish priest !

Very soon the effects of his vigorous administration of Tunis became apparent, in the building of additional churches, which were sadly needed, in the erection of an episcopal residence, and in the establishment of a secular clergy. He had to contend with much opposition on the part of the Italians, who objected to being ruled by a French Bishop. But the Archbishop's wisdom, tact, and conciliatory methods, and the magnetic charm of his gracious personality quickly gained for him affection and popularity.

The former Bishop, Mgr. Suter, then eighty-six years of age, before leaving for Italy to spend his last days in Ferrara, visited Mgr. Lavigerie and presented him with a stole which he had received long years before from the French Queen, Marie Amelie. "It is the emblem of the pastoral office," said the aged Bishop, "permit me to hand it over to you. It will be acceptable to you, coming as it does, from France ; and in offering it to you, I am happy to have the opportunity of showing that we who are brethren in the episcopate, are of one heart and soul. Judging merely by outward appearance, it might seem that such is not the case. But if you are seen wearing the stole that I wore, then everyone will see that such is the real state of affairs."

On his side the Archbishop treated Mgr. Suter with splendid generosity. On his appointment, the French Government at the express stipulation of the Pope, had promised to grant a pension to Mgr. Suter, as well as an ample subsidy to his successor. This promise was not fulfilled in either case, and the Archbishop fearing that Mgr. Suter might suffer from its non-fulfilment, allowed him out of his own private purse, an annuity of 6,000 francs.

The fact that the White Fathers had already penetrated to Tunis, rendered his appointment as Administrator Apostolic particularly congenial to Mgr. Lavigerie. Since 1875, the Fathers had been in charge of the little church of St. Louis built on the top of the hill of Byrsa in the very centre of the ancient city of Carthage, or rather of the ruins of what once was Carthage.

Concerning the coming of the White Fathers to this historic spot, the Archbishop tells a very interesting story :

“ This corner of African soil,” he says, “ is for ever sacred in the eyes of the French, as being the spot where King Louis breathed his last in 1270, whilst besieging Tunis, before proceeding to join the Crusaders in Palestine. It might well have happened that at so great a distance of time, considering that during the intervening centuries the Moslems have held sway in these regions, every trace of such memories would have vanished. Facts, however, prove that such is not the case. I am not now referring only to the Christians who have from time to time visited the coasts of Tunis. I am alluding to the Mussulmans who have never

ceased to entertain feelings of respect for the memory of St. Louis, and their homage touched me, in a certain sense, even more than that paid by Christians.

"It is now upwards of twelve years since I visited Carthage for the first time, and made a pilgrimage to the hill of Byrsa. As is usual in those parts, I was followed by crowds of ragged children who had gathered from the surrounding villages, attracted by the sight of a foreigner and a priest.

"They begged alms for 'the love of God!' But as I remained deaf to their entreaties—for I was thinking solely of the object of my visit, and of the glorious past of my country—they began again, after a moment's pause, crying out: '*For the love of St. Louis!*' I am not ashamed to confess that I was moved to tears on hearing these ignorant Arab children, from whom one would not certainly have expected any knowledge of our national history, thus pleading for alms, with the delicate tact of the Orientals, in the name of one of our own Kings." The state of the chapel as it then was filled the Archbishop with shame.

"On the taking of Algiers in 1830," he goes on, "Charles X., who then occupied the throne of France, obtained from the Bey of Tunis the cession of the plot of ground where tradition states that Louis breathed his last.

"Ten years later, Louis Philippe, in memory of his illustrious ancestor, erected there a chapel and a dwelling-house. This memorial of the past was utterly unworthy of the sacred and glorious associations connected with it, as well as of the

enormous sum expended on its construction. The chapel itself, a poor specimen of architectural art, barely held fifty persons; the adjacent buildings reminded one of those of an African farm. . . . The whole place wore a melancholy aspect of dilapidation and neglect.

“Upon first entering the Church of St. Louis my feelings were those of sorrow and shame. Even the very statue above the altar contributed to the depressing effect of the whole, for by an unaccountable mistake, the statue of Charles V. (le Sage) had been sent from France to Tunis instead of the statue of St. Louis, and the massive proportions of the marble figure were a sorry representation of the angelic features and slight form of the saintly Crusader.

“As I knelt before this statue which was never intended to occupy the place where it now stood, I made a solemn promise before God that I would do all in my power to make such changes as would render the chapel no longer a disgrace and an eye-sore to every Frenchman and every Christian.

“On leaving Carthage I went straight to Rome, and kneeling at the feet of the Holy Father (Pius IX) humbly represented to him the neglected condition in which this Sanctuary of Christian France had been left, adding that it seemed only suitable and natural to entrust the care of it to French hands, and finally proposing that my Algerian missionaries should undertake the charge. Scarcely had I finished speaking when the Holy Father said to me with a benignant smile: ‘I grant what you wish. It is fitting that the Sanc-

tuary of a King of France should be under the care of Frenchmen, as is the case even here in Rome.' ”

In 1882, Mgr. Lavigerie had been raised to the Cardinalate by Leo XIII. and in 1884, in response to the Cardinal's petition, the Holy Father re-established the archiepiscopal See of Carthage, at the same time nominating the Cardinal to the See, thus constituting him Primate of Africa. He still retained charge of the arch-diocese of Algiers, an assistant bishop being appointed to relieve him in the burthen of administration.

In the Brief announcing the re-establishment of the See of St. Cyprian, the Holy Father recalled the glories of the early African Church, and of Carthage, “first amongst the African cities to receive the faith of Christ, and now a heap of ruins—Carthage whose name recalled the memories of so many saints and martyrs, so many Bishops and Doctors—of Perpetua and Felicitas, of Augustine and Tertullian, and of Cyprian; Carthage which had held unrivalled sway over the Church of Northern Africa, for hers was the Metropolitan See, and to her authority three hundred and fifty churches were subject.” The Holy Father then proceeds to recount all that Cardinal Lavigerie had done to restore Carthage. “In the quarter of *Megara*, near the spot hallowed by the blood of St. Cyprian and not far from the place where his remains were interred, in the very midst of the ruins of Carthage, he has erected an episcopal residence with a chapel, where the poor and distressed can daily find relief in their woes.

“ In the episcopal residence, as well as at Tunis, and in all the most thickly populated parts of the Vicariate he has placed priests to exercise the sacred functions of the ministry ; while the Capuchin Fathers continue to carry on their work zealously. In the part called Byrsa he has founded the Seminary of Carthage where the young men, the future hope of the diocese, are being taught and trained under the care and instruction of learned teachers in theology, philosophy, and classics. He has added several fresh parishes to those already existing, one of them being established in the chapel of St. Louis, on the spot where the most pious King passed from this brief life to the eternal felicity of Heaven. Furthermore, he has opened a house for those who are suffering from poverty and old age, a hospital for the sick poor, schools for the education of both boys and girls.”

In a sermon delivered in the Cathedral of Bona on the occasion of the consecration of Mgr. Comber who had been nominated to the See of Constantine, Cardinal Lavigerie recalled to his hearers the memories of St. Augustine. These were inseparably associated with Bona which is the Hippo of the ancients, standing as it does on the site of the former city of which, like Carthage there now remains but a heap of ruins. Hippo was the See of the great Doctor of the Church as well as the capital of the Numidian Kings.

Tracing the footsteps of the great Augustine, the Cardinal continued : “ It was here in this city of Hippo that he wrote those great works which have immortalised his name. Here, every day, to the last years of his life, he instructed the little

ones and the lowly of his flock. It was from here that he wrote to the Emperors, to the great military commanders of his time, to the prefects of the Roman provinces, to Popes, to the Councils of the Church, to St. Jerome, to St. Paula, and to the saintly Roman ladies. Hippo became the luminous point towards which turned the eyes of the Christians of Africa and of the world. It was here when it was besieged by the Vandals that he died of grief on beholding the ruin of the city. . . ."

In 1885, at the Cardinal's invitation, a band of Franciscan missionary sisters arrived at Tunis. Having become acquainted with this Institute then in its infancy in Paris and in Rome, he was much attracted to it because of its two-fold aim—the Apostolate of the Mission and the Adoration of our divine Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. He installed the sisters in a house near the sea which was once the dwelling of a high Turkish official. His choice of this home for the Sisters had been determined by the fact that the closest research had identified the spot as undoubtedly the site of the Chapel of Saint Cyprian, "wherein Saint Monica spent the night in prayer for her beloved Augustine, whilst that son of so many tears, escaping her vigilance, had embarked for Rome, leaving her alone on the shore that resounded with her grief." The remembrance of that night of prayer and sorrow had deeply moved the Cardinal. "I reconstructed in thought," he said, "that mournful scene of the separation of mother and son—I saw the quays, the vessel vanishing on the far horizon, the dawn breaking over the purple-hued peaks that border the gulf.

And then it was I determined to become in the name of the Catholic world, the owner of these ruins and the ground that surrounds them, and to make the spot once more, a place of prayer."

To the Cardinal whose mind was ever dwelling on the glories of the early Church of Africa, the ruins of Carthage were a mine of wealth, so rich were they in evidences of the past. In excavating the stone for the erection of the Seminary on the hill of Byrsa, the Carthaginian Acropolis, which for so many ages had been buried beneath the sand, was brought to light; portions of walls, the shafts of broken columns, fragments of statues, of tombs belonging to all ages, small pieces of mosaic pavement, countless inscriptions; the massive remains of Punic, Roman, Christian, Arab civilisation, lying super-imposed in layers or heaped in promiscuous confusion.

Amongst the Cardinal's missionaries was one to whom these remains of by-gone ages told their story as eloquently as if spoken in words. To Fr. Delattre, a born archaeologist, and one filled with that enthusiasm for the science which is almost a necessity, these broken stones revealed the history of Carthage as clearly as if he himself had lived in the days of the city's proud pre-eminence. He collected these fragments, and pieced them together; he deciphered the inscriptions and classified the symbolic lamps. At the Cardinal's desire, he wrote a pamphlet in which he described the Christian lamps which had been found on the hill of Byrsa where the *savants* placed the site of the celebrated temple of the goddess, Tanith or Astarte, the Juno of the Romans. This

temple, in the year 319, had been converted into a church. The lamps were strikingly like those of the Roman catacombs.

The remains of a Christian cemetery of large extent were also discovered outside the walls of the ancient city, intramural interment having been forbidden by the laws of Carthage. The inscriptions on the fragments of tombstones, owing to their mutilated state, were extremely difficult to decipher, but experts in ancient Christian signs and formulae have been able to decide that they belong to the centuries from the second to the sixth.

On the occasion of the sacerdotal Jubilee of Leo XIII. Cardinal Lavigerie presented him with a very valuable ancient reliquary, a *Memoria* as it was called in the early days of the Church, which was found in the ruins of an ancient basilica of Numidia, of the fourth or fifth century.

In a Brief to the Cardinal thanking him for this "precious treasure" as the Pope describes it, the Holy Father, alluding to his hope that one day in spite of all difficulties the glories of the Church in Africa may be revived, renders to the Cardinal the following magnificent tribute:—"It is for you to direct the means, you whose eminent services to Africa give you a place in the ranks of those who have deserved most of Catholicism and civilisation."

CHAPTER XI.

ANTI-SLAVERY CRUSADE

The sufferings endured by the second band of missionaries on their long journey, resulting in the loss of several precious lives, directed Mgr. Lavigerie's attention to the task of finding a less dangerous, and costly route to the Great Lakes. To this end, he sent Fr. Deguerry to Egypt with orders to ascend the Upper Nile to investigate the route followed by some English explorers. This was by Suez, Djedcla, Suakim, Berbera, Khartoum, Bedeu, Majungo, Fatiko, Fouera, and Mrooli, the last Egyptian station which is two days' journey from Ugandi, and five or six from the Missionary Station at Roubaga. The Archbishop wrote to M. de Freycinet asking him to recommend Fr. Deguerry's mission to the agents of the French Republic, laying before them at the same time the results of the White Fathers' missionary labours in Equatorial Africa, and pointing out the great part that French influence might play in those regions. The minister replied that he quite recognised how supremely important it was for France to extend her relations in those regions that for several years had been explored with so

much perseverance by the travellers of other nations. He concluded his letter with these words: "For these reasons, to facilitate Fr. Deguerry's mission, I am writing, in accordance with your wish to the Agent and Consul-General for France at Cairo, recommending that clergyman to them, and asking them to obtain for him all necessary facilities on the Upper Nile."

Meanwhile, in February, 1880, the Archbishop appealed to Propaganda, asking that in addition to Nyanza and Tanganyika, two new and distinct missions might be established, one at Kabylie, the other on the Upper Congo. In September Cardinal Simeoni, Prefect of the Propaganda, made known to the Archbishop that his wishes had been complied with. The missions had been extended and formed into four districts namely, the two Apostolic Provicariates of Nyanza and Tanganyika, and the two Apostolic Vicariates of the Upper Congo and Onyamyeembe. Exercising the powers given to him Mgr. Lavigerie confided the charge of the two Pro-vicariates to members of his order, both of whom were raised to the episcopate; to Tanganyika, he appointed Mgr. Charbonnier, whilst Fr. Livinhac, Superior of the first band of missionaries, was consecrated in 1884, and received the Lake district.

At the missionary stations in Kabylie the White Fathers took the place of the Jesuits who, in 1881, had been forced to leave owing to fierce attacks made upon them by some of the natives who resented their apostolic zeal.

Meanwhile, from the first Mission Station of Sainte Marie at Roubaga in Uganda, encouraging

reports continued to reach the Archbishop. Established in a dwelling, hastily constructed in the midst of banana groves, the Fathers had gathered round them twenty poor orphans. Mindful of an Arab proverb, that to teach an old man is to write on water, but to teach a child is to write on stone, the Fathers always made the instruction of the children their first care.

Writing from St. Marie in 1881, Fr. Livinhac says: "We have about one hundred adult catechumens. Thank God! there are here a large number of souls most anxious to know the right road and to follow it at any cost. I never expected to find such good dispositions amongst the negroes.—But it is from the better class of slaves that we hope most, these being most anxious to be instructed in our Religion, and to embrace it It would seem as if the angels had preceded us here and prepared the way for us."

Undoubtedly at some unknown period an angel in earthly form had appeared amongst these poor people and prepared the ground for the good seed which in future years the Fathers were to sow. It is strange to read in the accounts of the missionaries that whilst the neighbouring tribes had no idea whatever of God, of the moral law, of a future existence, amongst the Baganda natives there prevailed a clear, definite belief in a Supreme Beneficent Being who was the Creator of the world, the one only God. They also believed in certain evil spirits whom they called Loubali, in the survival of our spiritual nature, and in the first principles of the natural law and its obligations. To the great surprise of the Fathers these

people also observed Sunday as a day of feasting. When questioned as to how they had learned all these things, they answered that long ago an extraordinary man whom they called *Kintee* had come amongst them and had taught them the existence of a God and of another world, as well as the distinction between good and evil. They admitted, that if they were somewhat morally better than the other tribes, it was due to this man's teachings that they had never forgotten. He was a saint, they declared, he possessed nothing, he was good, very good, and his words were full of wisdom.

Even still, they said, he occasionally appeared to rebuke those who were going astray and to bring them back to the right path. Wherever these apparitions occurred the place was regarded as sacred.

With this tradition, undoubtedly true, were intermingled so many fantastic stories that it was hard to disentangle the truth from falsehood.

Who was this man? Fr. Livinhac questions whether "he may not have been some missionary perhaps from Abyssina, who, in the beginning of his apostolic work, had been overtaken by death."

A strange event is told as occurring in connection with the arrival of the missionaries in that favoured land, one which made a profound impression on the natives. It seems that whilst the Fathers were journeying by land to Uganda, Mgr. Lavigerie fearing for their safety in the region of Nyanza, where two Englishmen had just been murdered, had despatched a letter to them directing them to alter their route and to proceed

towards Manyema in the region of the Upper Congo. For some reason that never transpired this particular letter was the only one that failed to reach them throughout their journey. Finally when at last it did arrive in some mysterious fashion in their mail-bag, they had been a whole year settled in Uganda and their Mission was already in a flourishing condition. The natives loved to repeat this story in which they found matter for fervent thanksgiving to God.

Within the limits of this little work it would be impossible to give a detailed account of the labours of the White Fathers in Equatorial Africa. Suffice it to say that in the spite of most tremendous obstacles, of violent persecution, those labours have been crowned with splendid success.

In this year of 1919, the fiftieth on the bead roll of Time since the foundation of the Society, the White Fathers have charge of the whole region round the great Lakes, which is divided into the Vicariates of Uganda, Nyanza, Tanganyika, Nyassa, Kivon, Ounyanyembe, Bangioueolo and the Upper Congo, each of these being in extent twelve times larger than the whole of France. In addition to these, the Fathers also have charge of the French Sahara, known as the Pro-Vicariate of the Sudan, and of eleven mission stations in the Arab country of North Africa.

The labours of the Fathers have been fertilized by the blood of martyrs, the martyrs of their Society who fell under the poisoned arrows of their murderers in the Sahara, and by the hundreds of native martyrs who perished in Uganda, in the persecution of 1886.

Whilst his missionaries were battling at close quarters against the traffic in human beings, Cardinal Lavigerie himself was preaching in Europe a crusade against this foul blot on humanity in the hope of rousing the nations to action. It was due, he said, to the civilised world that the nests of slave-traders had been destroyed along the African coast, and he felt sure that one day, this same civilised world would destroy the slave markets of the interior of Africa.

It was in obedience to the Holy Father that the Cardinal entered on his anti-slavery campaign.

True, long before, when appointed Archbishop of Algeria, he had in his first letter to the diocesan clergy denounced the African slave-trade. Again when appointed Apostolic Delegate of the Sahara and the Soudan, the ransom of the poor children who had fallen into the clutches of the Arab slave-traders, constituted one of the chief cares of his office. At Tanganyika, at Nyanza, at Tabora, at Zanzibar and at Carthage, and later at Malta, he founded orphanages where the poor victims whom he had rescued from a fate worse than death, might be trained in the ways of civilised life and at the same time receive a Christian education.

In 1888, the Cardinal addressed a letter to the Pope on the subject of the African slave trade which had momentous results. Just at that time the Emperor of Brazil, Dom Pedro, had declared his intention of decreeing the emancipation of all the slaves in his kingdom, and the Cardinal learned that the Pope was about to issue an Encyclical

to the Brazilian Bishops, calculated to hasten the accomplishment of the Emperor's grand design.

In his letter to the Pope the Cardinal solicited the Holy Father's charitable intervention on behalf of the African slaves. "Most Holy Father," he wrote, "it is not only in South America that slavery exists. More especially in Africa is it to be found in all its horror." He then described the terrible scenes of which his missionaries were daily witnesses, and he quoted the words of the great African explorer, Livingstone, who declared that the remembrance of the awful atrocities he had seen often caused him terrible nightmares from which he would awaken in an agony of fear and horror.

The letter concluded with a petition that the Holy Father would include in his Encyclical to the Brazilian Hierarchy, an exhortation to the African Bishops also to use their utmost efforts to put a stop to the infamous practices of the slave-traders. His prayer was heard. In May, 1888, the Encyclical, *Tu plurimus*, addressed to the Brazilian bishops, was published; and in it a considerable portion of the Cardinal's letter was given almost *verbatim*.

At an audience granted to him in 1888, the Holy Father commissioned Cardinal Lavigerie to undertake in Europe the crusade against slavery. "It is upon your Eminence," said the Holy Father, "that we more particularly rely for the success of all these difficult African works and missions. We know your active zeal, which is combined with such discretion. We know all that you have done so far, and we have confidence that you will

never cease until you are assured of the success of all your great undertakings."

It was enough that the Holy Father relied upon him. He would not fail in the charge committed to him.

Throughout Europe, in France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Germany, in the pulpit, on the platform, with that fiery impassioned eloquence of which he was so unrivalled a master, the Cardinal thrilled his audiences with his story of the persecuted slaves of Africa. Everywhere, he won the sympathy of the people, whether Catholic or Protestant, and secured their co-operation. States and individuals alike were roused to action. The Cardinal even succeeded in gaining the ear of "the man of blood and iron," Bismarck, and he induced the Reichstag on the motion of Herr Windthorst to subscribe to the policy of destroying the African slave trade.

Wherever he could find a pulpit or a platform from which to speak and a people to listen to him, the Cardinal declared he would preach his crusade, and naturally he turned to Great Britain, where he was assured of a favourable hearing. It was therefore arranged that (on July 31, 1888), the Cardinal should attend a meeting of the British Anti-Slavery Society to be held in London under the presidency of Earl Granville. This meeting was not confined to the representatives of a single Church. On the platform were seen several Protestant bishops, as well as Cardinal Manning, and Commander Cameron who had spent seven years in exploring the interior of Africa. Lord Granville introduced Cardinal

Lavigerie to this Assembly as the foremost champion of a cause that had ever made the strongest appeal to England, and then requested His Eminence to do the Assembly the honour of opening the proceedings.

The Cardinal spoke in French and his address was a masterpiece of burning eloquence. He reminded his audience that England had been the first nation to declare war against slavery in the West Indies, and recalled the names of Wilberforce, Clarkson, Buxton, names for ever dear to the friends of liberty.

In touching language he described his visit to the grave of the great explorer, Stanley, in Westminster Abbey. "It was with deep emotion," he said, "that I read those words written by him when at the point of death and which England has caused to be inscribed on his tomb: 'I can do nothing more than to wish that the most abundant blessings of Heaven may descend on all those, whether English, Americans, or Turks, who shall contribute to the disappearance from this world of the awful evil of slavery.'

"Gentlemen," continued the Cardinal, "you are the inheritors of his glory, and you must be the executors of his wishes."

His Eminence concluded his discourse with these words: "What I ask from this great assembly, without distinction of persons—for however much some of us may be divided on some subjects, we are all of one accord when it becomes a matter of liberty, of humanity, of justice,—is that it should, according to the individual strength of each one, join in a generous agitation in favour of

a cause so deserving of sympathy. Support of a pecuniary kind also is needed for our little army ; heroes we may have, and that is much, but heroes must live ; I know that heroes must eat and heroes must drink, and means sometimes not only support but make heroes. For this object I appeal to you. For humanity, for your brethren, for charity, for mercy, I appeal to you for the object of carrying on the gigantic task of the suppression of Mohammedan slavery, which would give the death-blow to the internal slave traffic in Africa—I appeal to you to respond to my prayer.”

But in spite of all efforts, of the most active propaganda, of the practical sympathy of Christian Europe, of the vigorous action of the English Government entailing vast expenditure, and resulting only in the loss of many lives, the African slave trade continued to flourish, and has even, we are told on good authority, increased.

Amongst the various causes alleged as contributory to the failure of all efforts to suppress this hideous traffic in flesh and blood, first and foremost was the conflicting interests of European powers, and their mutual jealousy and suspicion, which prevented that combined unity of action indispensable to success.

And now, in these days of world-upheaval, one asks oneself sadly how will the cause of the poor African slave fare ? Who will champion before the League of Nations the most down-trodden, the most cruelly wronged and persecuted of all God's creatures ?

Of one thing we are assured, that as long as the Society of the White Fathers exists, so long will

its members labour, even at the risk of life itself, for the relief and protection of those whose cause was so dear to the heart of their great Founder.

CHAPTER XII.

GETHSEMANE

It may be said with truth that from the first moment of his landing on the shores of Africa the Cardinal's life had been one continuous struggle for the rights of the Church, and the interests of the flock committed to his charge. All the splendid fruit of his labour was won by a struggle with the officials of an infidel Government. The success of each work of charity which he created represented a victory won at the cost of—God alone knew how much suffering. But he was the servant of a Master who had trodden the wine-press alone, "and who had said that the servant was not above the Master."

When the shadows of age and approaching death were deepening round him, this faithful servant met the greatest trial of his life, and entered Gethsemane to share his Master's agony.

In October, 1890, the Cardinal visited Rome, to give the Pope an account of the anti-slavery crusade which he had undertaken in obedience to the wish of the Holy Father. At the audience granted to him, the Cardinal laid before the Holy Father his views regarding the injury done to Religion in France by the inveterate hostility of

the Monarchists to the Republic, a course of action which rendered useless any protest against anti-clerical laws.

In all his pastorals, and in his instructions to his missionaries the Cardinal had inculcated submission to the legally constituted Government when acting within its own sphere and without detriment to Religion. He believed that the sole remedy for the evils of the day was the formation of a Catholic Constitutional party which whilst recognising the Republic, would at the same time watch over the interests of Religion.

The Pope entered fully into these views which were in harmony with his own. He agreed that the time had come for the acceptance of the existing form of government in France, a form which in itself was not contrary to the teaching of the Church. But he did not consider that the moment had yet arrived for him to make a Papal pronouncement.

Meantime it was his wish that the Cardinal should take the initiative. There was no man in France better fitted to do so, nor whose action would have greater influence on public opinion, more especially just then, when his recent anti-slavery crusade had won for him such unbounded popularity.

For the first time in his life the Cardinal's spirit quailed before the task allotted to him. With clearest vision he foresaw the storm which such a step would evoke. He would alienate nearly all Catholic France, including many of his best and dearest friends. Worst misfortune of all, his African mission, all his works of charity

would suffer deadly injury from a financial point of view. For it was the generous offerings of the French aristocracy which provided these with their chief means of support. During his whole life he had been loyally devoted to the cause of the French Monarchy. During the life-time of the Comte de Chambord the closest ties of friendship had existed between him and the Cardinal, and since the Comte's death, his wife had been a generous benefactress to the African Missions.

But the Holy Father had spoken ; it was enough. He will obey, no matter at what cost to his Society, to his works, were it ruin itself, no matter at what cost, even of life if necessary, to himself.

The occasion of the momentous pronouncement was left wholly to his own discretion. But the Pope impressed upon him the necessity of not urging too strongly the authority of the Vatican. At the right moment the Holy Father would assume full responsibility.

Sad at heart, and with fainting spirit, the Cardinal returned to Algiers. All noticed his sadness and more than ordinary pre-occupation, but he spoke no word of his trouble to anyone. Quite unexpectedly, circumstances afforded a favourable opportunity for his action. Early in November, the French Mediterranean Fleet visited Algiers, and in honour of the event there was much festivity amongst the French residents. In the absence of the Governor-General, the Cardinal, as holding, after him, the highest official rank, invited the officers of the fleet to a banquet. Invitations were issued to the heads of the various

Government departments, civil and military. In presence of this representative assembly, he would publicly make known his acceptance of the Republic. For three days the Cardinal's distress of mind was visible to his whole household.

On the morning of the fateful day so great was his agitation that he feared he would have to depute the reading of his speech to one of his priests. His tremendous will-power, however, enabled him to regain self-control.

At the hour appointed there were assembled at the archiepiscopal residence forty officers of the fleet, including the vice-admirals Duperré and Alquier, the rear-admirals O'Neill and Dufresse, together with the generals commanding the different army divisions, and the officials of the civil administration.

As the moment for the performance of the most dreaded act of his whole life approached, the Cardinal felt his strength fail. He made a sign to the Abbé Piquemal to come nearer to him in case he should require his aid. But the momentary weakness passed unnoticed. He rose, as did the whole company also. Then, whilst all remained standing, in a clear distinct voice, he said :

"Gentlemen, permit me before we separate, to propose to you the toast of the French Navy, so nobly represented to-day."

Having briefly recalled some memories of the Navy's glorious past, and alluded to the presence of the representatives of every branch of the government administration in Algiers, the Cardinal went on to express his pleasure at the union reigning amongst Frenchmen in that foreign land, as

was so clearly demonstrated by the assembly at his table.

“Union,” he continued, “is for us the supreme need of the hour. Union is also, let me tell you, the most earnest desire of the Church and of her pastors of every degree in the hierarchy. Undoubtedly, the Church does not ask us to renounce the glorious memories of the past, nor our sentiments of loyalty and of gratitude. But when a nation has positively declared its will, and as Leo XIII. lately proclaimed that the form of government has in itself nothing contrary to those principles which alone can ensure to Christian and civilised countries their continued existence; when submission to this form of government is necessary to save our country from the ruin which threatens her—then has the moment come for us to put an end to our divisions, to sacrifice all that conscience and honour permits, or rather commands.

“Save this submission, this patriotic acceptance, there is in fact no other possible way of preserving peace and order, nor of saving the world from social peril, nor even of saving the Religion of which we are the ministers.”

It was over; the dreaded act was accomplished. He had publicly professed his submission to the Republic.

During the Cardinal's speech profound silence prevailed. His words evoked no applause, and when at last he sat down, the guests maintained the same unbroken silence. It was as if they had been suddenly turned to stone. Even the Admiral made no move to fulfil his part,

until the Cardinal's voice was heard asking: "Admiral, will you not respond to the toast?"

Then he rose, and in the fewest words possible proposed the toast of "His Eminence the Cardinal and the clergy of Algiers."

This curt response, the chilling silence of the assembly, all too clearly presaged the coming storm.

That evening the news was flashed to all parts of Europe, and the next day the storm, foreseen by the Cardinal, broke in France, but with a violence far greater than even he had anticipated.

For several months, he was the object of every form of insult, of abuse, of calumny. The Royalist journals joined together in an outburst of uncontrolled wrath against what one described as "this unconditional capitulation to the forces of Freemasonry."

Each day brought him piles of anonymous letters in which the cowardly writers poured out on him the vilest abuse. In some of the comic papers he was caricatured in shameless fashion, and copies of these were invariably sent to him.

But the Cardinal's capital offence consisted in his having allowed, or as was reported, ordered the band of the Apostolic Students to play the *Marseillaise* during the banquet. This report really caused much grief to numbers of good Catholics who, whilst far from joining in the violent manifestations against the Cardinal, yet found it very hard to forgive him for allowing to be played by his students, that hymn of blood to the strains of which their priests, so many of their kith and kin had been ruthlessly shot down or guillotined.

To this charge the Cardinal replied that for strangers, in all the French colonies, the *Marseillaise* is the national air of France, and evokes no horrible memories of bloodshed and revolution and has no hateful meaning. In support of his statement, he quoted a mass of evidence.

It was said that after proposing the toast of the French navy the Cardinal ordered the band to play the *Marseillaise*. That this was not the case we know from the testimony of one present. In a letter written to a member of the French hierarchy, Father Hacquard, speaking of this report, says : "That is not correct. The *Marseillaise* was played, according to custom, to welcome the guests on their arrival." After the banquet, whilst the company were taking coffee in the drawing-room, the musicians dined at their leisure on the remnants of the feast.

As the Cardinal himself pointed out in his sermons, his pastorals, in his instructions to his missionaries, he had repeatedly enunciated the same principles as he now expressed. It is hard for the ordinary reader to understand why his pronouncement on this particular occasion should have excited such wrath. As has been said before, foreign politics do not come within the scope of this little book. At the same time it would not have been possible to omit all references to this tragic episode. It is of surpassing interest, as it presents the illustrious subject of our sketch in a new aspect. Hitherto he has moved through these pages the grand central figure, dominating all, ruling all, partly by force of his imperious nature, partly by the fascination of his magnetic

personality. We have seen his commanding genius conceive and execute gigantic works, in face of seemingly insuperable obstacles.

And now, at a word from the aged Vicar of Christ, this man of iron will, impatient of opposition, becomes simple and obedient as a little child. With full provision of all that it entails of sorrow, of humiliation, of shame, of calumny, he accepts the task imposed upon him by the Supreme Pontiff. To fulfil it, he must die to self, he must drink the chalice of suffering to the very dregs.

The Cardinal in a letter addressed to his clergy sent the original copy of his speech. He points out that his pronouncement was only a brief resumé of his pastoral instructions and the faithful echo of the teachings of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. In answer to the calumny that he had accepted the Republic unreservedly, such as it was, laws against religious liberty included, the Cardinal indignantly exclaims: "It is infamous to attribute such things to a Bishop, who for thirty years of his life has laboured and fought in defence of Religion, and who will continue to defend it against all attacks."

On the 19th November, one of the French Bishops, wishing to be assured of the Church's teachings, wrote to Cardinal Rampolla, then Secretary of State, whose reply was a luminous exposition of the Church's doctrine, and practically a restatement of all that Cardinal Lavigerie had said. This afforded the persecuted Cardinal much consolation, which was increased by another letter written in the name of five French Cardinals, in which they fully endorsed his acceptance of existing political forms of Government.

A month later sixty-five of the Bishops subscribed to this declaration, and thus the sentiments contained therein were in effect accepted by nearly the whole of the French hierarchy. Finally, above and beyond all voices, was heard that of the Vicar of Christ. In February, 1892, the Encyclical, *Inter innumeras Sollicitudines* was addressed in French "to all the bishops and Catholics of France." In this Encyclical Leo XIII. completely vindicated the Cardinal's action. It was in the Cardinal's own words "The crown and the confirmation of the instructions which the Sovereign Pontiff had given to the Church and which he himself had transmitted to the Faithful."

The hour of bitter suffering was over.

CHAPTER XIII.

“WELL DONE, FAITHFUL SERVANT”

The years 1890-92 were years of great tribulation for the Cardinal. The terrible persecution of the Christians in Uganda, during which fourteen of the White Fathers, five lay brothers and numbers of the natives won the crown of martyrdom, and which nearly resulted in the complete wiping out of the Uganda missions, was a mortal wound to his great heart. From the beginning of 1892, it was painfully manifest to his friends that the term of his earthly life was drawing to a close. He, himself, clearly recognised that the Master's summons would not be much longer delayed. The silver Jubilee of his Archiepiscopacy occurring in March of that same year of 1892, his clergy and people were anxious to give expression to their love and veneration by fitting celebration of the occasion. But the Cardinal, writing from his sick bed, refused permission for any public manifestation. All he asked of his friends was that they should pray for his happy death.

During the whole of that summer he suffered cruelly, his malady allowing him no rest night or day.

"Never have I seen," said one of his doctors, "anyone suffer more, rarely as much, and what surprised me was that he could bear such sufferings for so long a time, and yet have strength to do all that he did."

His strength of mind remained unbroken. If, in moments of extreme agony, he was moved to the least expression of irritability, he immediately with extreme humility asked forgiveness of his attendants.

During his illness, every morning at six o'clock, Mass was said in a small ante-room, the door of which being opened, enabled the illustrious invalid to assist at the Adorable Sacrifice. "It was always," writes his chaplain, "with profound emotion that I gave my blessing to the august invalid stretched on his bed of suffering, and laid upon his lips the Sacred Host."

He had cherished a hope that he would die in March, the month consecrated to St. Joseph. But his hour had not yet struck. Through all the summer and autumn his malady continued to gain ground, his day being spent in suffering, his nights in agony. And still the splendid intellect remained unclouded. "I remarked," wrote one of his priests who was in constant attendance upon him, "that the moment there was any question of business, at once, in spite of his ever increasing weakness, he regained all his energy and his mind became perfectly clear."

In preparation for the Feast of All Saints, the Cardinal made a Novena for a happy death. On the day of the Feast itself he said: "I hope the end will come to-morrow, or at least during the

octave, that so I shall have a share in all the prayers offered for the dead by the Church everywhere." And when the octave passed leaving him still on earth, "Wait," he said, "the month of the dead is not yet over. You will see that I shall not spend the whole of it on earth." His prediction was fulfilled.

On Thursday, the 24th November, his condition became alarmingly worse, his speech being so indistinct that it was with difficulty he could be understood. Early in the morning of Friday an attack of cerebral congestion shattered all hope. The Cardinal could no longer speak, but still gave signs of consciousness. At ten o'clock that night he entered into his agony. Amongst those around his death-bed were his confessor, Père Buffet, S.J., his Assistant Bishop, his physician, and the Sister of the Bon Secours who had nursed him through this last illness. At midnight, Mgr. Dusserre recited the prayers for the dying, and a few minutes afterwards, quite calmly, Charles Martial Lavigerie gave back his great soul to his Creator, being then in his 68th year of his age. He had spent twenty five years in the episcopate, and ten as Prince of the Church. By a happy coincidence his holy death took place on the Feast of Saint Peter of Alexandria, a Bishop of the Church in Africa.

As soon as the Cardinal's death became known in France and throughout the world the sorrow and mourning for his loss was universal. When the sad news was broken to Leo XIII. by Cardinal Rampolla, the Holy Father, recalling the irreparable loss suffered by the Church in the death of her great son, exclaimed, "I myself, I feel all that

I have lost. I loved Cardinal Lavigerie as a brother, as Peter loved Andrew."

By desire of the French Ambassador a solemn Requiem Mass was offered in the French Church of St. Louis in Rome, at which several Cardinals and all the high officials of the various European embassies attended.

In a letter to the Assistant Bishop of Carthage, Cardinal Ledochowski, Prefect of the Propaganda, conveyed "the undying gratitude of the Holy See to the champion of Christ fallen on the battle-field, and now sleeping in the peace of the Lord."

At the instance of the Governor of Algiers, the French Republic decreed that "the highest honours that the State could pay should be paid to the dead Cardinal, both on account of his great position and of the services which he rendered to France."

The Cardinal had left express directions that whenever his death occurred, his final resting place should be at Carthage in a vault which he had caused to be specially constructed beneath the cathedral.

On the day fixed for the transfer of the venerated remains to the warship which the Government had appointed to convey them to Tunis, the whole route from the Cathedral to the Admiralty Quay was lined by troops; every vessel in the harbour and all the public buildings had their flags at half-mast, and as the funeral procession advanced the roll of the muffled drums mingled with the voices of the priests chanting the Miserere.

Before being carried on board the cruiser to the *Chapelle Ardente* erected on the lower deck, the

coffin was placed for a few moments on a catafalque facing the ship, whilst the guns of the fort thundered a salute. Then the Governor, advancing, in a few words expressed the regrets of all for the great and good man to whose venerated remains they now, with sad hearts, said "Farewell." "I cannot," said the Governor, "allow this coffin, which to-day all France salutes, to depart without a few farewell words. It was the Cardinal's wish that his body should be taken to Carthage, but he has left his heart to us. It was here that he conceived and carried into execution the great work of his life, and that at a time when no one as yet had given a thought to Africa. To his friends," he continued, "his memory will be ever dear and France that he so loved will hold him in eternal remembrance as one of the best and noblest of her sons. Farewell! dear and venerable Cardinal."

On the 8th of December, Feast of the Immaculate Conception, all that was mortal of Cardinal Lavigerie was committed to the tomb. After the consecration of the Cathedral of Carthage ten years before, the Cardinal had descended to the vault which he had chosen as his last resting place and prayed there for some time; on leaving it, he said to those with him: "When next I descend there, I shall not return." Some time before his death, speaking to some of the Fathers of his Society, regarding the various works of charity he had established, he said: "Do not be anxious, you will see that it is after my death they will really increase and develop." At present, these prophetic words are being fully realised. His

apostolic work is everywhere increasing ; in Algeria in the Sahara, the Soudan, in Tunis, in Equatorial Africa.

Once the Cardinal declared that on his heart would be for ever graven the words, The Church, France, Africa, " the Church whose minister I am, France whose son I am, and Africa of which God has made me the shepherd."





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